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PART XX.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS OF TURKEY.

December 1877.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

PART XX.

No. 1.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 1.)

(No. 118. Political.)

Scutari, November 17, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that this afternoon about 300 volunteers have arrived from Tirana, among whom are 42 Christians of the Orthodox Greek Church.

From two of these Christians, who are men of position in Tirana, and one of whom was educated in Athens, I received the following account of the manner in which they were made to enroll themselves as Bashi-Bazouks:—

On the afternoon of the 12th instant, the public crier and mollahs ran through the town announcing that the day of trial for Islam had arrived, as the infidel Christian Montenegrins had invaded Mohammedan territory, and were already at Kotrokol, beyond Antivari. Those who would not rush to the defence of the Mohammedan soil ought to be killed.

This appeal had at first the effect of placing the Christians at Tirana in the greatest danger, for the Mohammedans understood it to be the signal for their immediate destruction; but when the authorities explained that an armed contingent was required to start immediately for Scutari, they refused to leave unless they were accompanied by a fair proportion of Christians, and these perceiving that it was the only way of securing safety consented that one man out of each family should proceed to the war.

Although my informants believe that they have been brought by their Mohammedan fellow-townsmen with the intention of ultimate massacre, I am under the impression that they are looked upon as a possible means of securing fair treatment at the hands of the enemy should the fortune of war go against the Mohammedans.

I need hardly say that I shall carefully watch the treatment to which these Christians may be subjected, and use my best endeavours in their favour with the authorities should I notice any unfavourable symptoms.

Inflammatory messages were also dispatched from Scutari to the authorities in all the towns of North and Middle Albania and Old Servia; but, I am told, the drain which the Mohammedan populations in those districts have already sustained for the supply of regular and irregular soldiers has caused the summons to be received rather coldly, if threats of vengeance on the local Christians are excepted.

At Durazzo, Cavaja, and El Bassan, I understand the Christians are in the greatest fear, and I should be disposed to think with reason if the Mohammedans had not commenced to feel that the cause of the Christians may in the end prove the strongest.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 2.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 120. Political.)

Scutari, November 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I WILL not attempt to report to your Lordship what is passing between the contending Turkish and Montenegrin forces, although the roll of musketry and the booming of artillery can be heard from where I write. Were I to do so I should only recite a tangled mass of stories told by excited and frightened people. More truthful accounts are probably reaching the English newspapers from their correspondents with the Montenegrins.

But I have no hesitation whatever in assuring your Lordship, from personal observation, that the Turkish Commander-in-chief and all the other authorities are in the greatest state of despondency.

Ali Saib Pasha feels himself overwhelmed by the energy and force of the Montenegrin invasion, and through the utter inadequacy of his strength to meet it.

His Excellency's army a week ago consisted of sixteen battalions of Nizams and Redifs, and five battalions of Mustafiz, making a total of about 10,000 men to guard a long and rugged frontier.

Two and a half battalions have now been probably lost with Antivari and its blockhouses; two others are watching the recently-subdued district of Mirdicia. Eleven are hardly sufficient to hold the bombarded fortifications at Spuz and Podgoritza. One forms the nucleus of the garrison of Muric, another guards the landing-place at Helm, and two more have been withdrawn from Podgoritza to stem the Montenegrin invasion threatening Scutari. The remaining battalion and a half garrison Jabiak and the Lake Islands.

The authorities have made an appeal to the religious feelings of the Mohammedans of the surrounding districts. A few thousands of volunteers are slowly coming in, proclaiming their inability to resist successfully by pointing to their arms, which are muzzle-loading Enfield rifles, the supply of breech-loaders having long ago been exhausted.

Last night, whilst I was with Ali Saib Pasha, I heard him issue an order for the two battalions at Kotrokol, the only regular troops facing the Montenegrins coming from Antivari, to be formed in line behind the irregulars, and to open fire upon the latter should they attempt to retreat.

Orders of this nature are not likely to have the desired effect of repelling the invader, and Ali Saib Pasha explained to me that when a Field Marshal has no force to command, it is well that he should stop at home as he is doing.

The Governor-General, Mustafa Pasha, is equally disheartened, and once or twice he has asked me if I could not assist in bringing about an arrangement with Montenegro. I have replied that this depended entirely on the Porte, but that of course no arrangement would be thought of as long as the exact position of affairs was not realized by the Supreme Government.

I have telegraphed to Her Majesty's Ambassador explaining that it would be of great advantage if his Excellency could obtain permission for me to telegraph to him in cypher what probably the Turkish authorities from their traditional etiquette are unable to report to their superiors.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 3.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 121. Political.)

Scutari, November 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed by me this day to Mr. Layard, and reporting to his Excellency the belief of the Turkish authorities that the Montenegrin force operating in the district of Antivari is accompanied by a large body of Garibaldians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 3.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Scutari, November 19, 1877.

Sir,

THE night before last I had the honour to forward to your Excellency the following telegram:—

"Not sent home.

"It has been reported to the authorities here that there are large bodies of men with the Montenegrin force operating in the Antivari district wearing the European dress, and an impression exists that they may be Garibaldians.

"The task of defending the long Albanian frontier with the existing force can hardly be expected to be effected with success."

I believe, with reference to the first paragraph of the above telegram, that it is possible many Austrian subjects from the district of Budua and the Bocche di Cattaro are with the invaders, as they are Montenegrins in everything except territorial allegiance.

The Turkish Generals, however, assure me that it has been reported to them that there are at least 5,000 men with the enemy dressed in European trowsers and kepis, and that they were disembarked at Antivaro from steamers and sailing vessels. They are convinced that they are Italians and call them Garibaldians.

I, on the other hand, have observed, since the commencement of the war, a desire on the part of the Turks to ascribe their ill success to the presence of foreigners among the Montenegrins, and am inclined to think that the Prince of Montenegro is perfectly aware of the danger he would run by an alliance with the Radical revolutionary elements of Europe. It would at once draw upon him the ill-will of his Austrian neighbour, and would probably checkmate his ambitious views of an advance beyond the Slav inhabited portions of North Albania by bringing at once his country under overwhelming Italian influence.

Additional colour has, nevertheless, been given, whilst I write, to the reported presence of foreigners with the Montenegrins by a head of a man, killed in an engagement during the past night, and which has been barbarously brought as a trophy into Scutari. The head wears a fur cap quite unlike the Montenegrin bonnet, and, it is said, the body was also dressed in the garb of a stranger.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 4.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Bucharest, December 1, 1877.

IT is reported upon reliable authority that General Gourko's force has suffered a disaster.

No. 5.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(Telegraphic.)

Pesth, December 1, 1877, 5 P.M.

COUNT ANDRASSY has received no information from the Danubian Commission proposing that neutral vessels of war should be stationed at Sulina; but he says if the other neutral maritime Powers consider such a measure expedient, Austria will take part in it, though she may require her cruizers in the Adriatic.

No. 6.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 512.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 1, 1877.

CAPTAIN TROTTER telegraphs on the 29th from Djibat Tepessi, near Batoum, that the Ottoman army left Hassi Bandi on the night of the 26th, retiring in good order,

and without any loss, to Samieh and Korita; the following day the Russians retired to Hassi Bandi. The Kurds and other Ottoman irregulars fired upon them for an hour and a-half. Tchourouk-sou is again in possession of the Turks. Four men-of-war stationed there cannonaded the enemy at intervals on the 27th and 28th.

No. 7.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

Cairo, December 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

PORTE demands a further large contingent of about 12,000 men from Egypt in such pressing terms that the Viceroy cannot refuse, notwithstanding his great financial difficulties, but it will be a most serious strain on the country.

No. 8.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

Athens, December 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

M. TRICOUPI has informed me that an insurrection may take place in Crete at any moment; that he is most anxious to prevent it, and that with this object he is dissuading those Cretan Chiefs who are now in Athens from returning to Crete.

Confidentially he has also informed me that he possesses information which leads him to have but little doubt that, in certain eventualities, Austria will occupy Bosnia, and that Italy will in that case feel bound to occupy Northern Albania, and that then he considered that a Greek force should occupy as much Turkish territory inhabited by Greeks as possible.

His Excellency admitted, in reply to my question, that an unofficial interchange of ideas on this point had taken place between the Governments of Greece and Austria, and Greece and Italy.

No. 9.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

Tiflis, December 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

POSITION of Dervish Pasha likely to be soon assailed by the corps at the disposition of the Grand Duke.

No. 10.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

Poradim, December 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TURKS have retired from Orkhanie to Soña. Yesterday, rain; to-day, like summer.

No. 11.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

Tiflis, October 2, 1877.

(No. 121.)

My Lord,

IN an official telegram from Karajali, of the 21st September, it is stated that the revolt in Daghistan has been limited to the district of Gunib.

In the telegram of the 28th ultimo we hear that the insurrection has spread to the Kazikumuk and Tabasseran districts; further, that some 6,000 insurgents have been routed at Lavashi; and in that of the 29th ultimo we are told that the aul of the Lavashi has been destroyed, the district of Dargin, in Central Daghistan, having been pacified. On the other hand, from unofficial sources, we are informed that the iron bridge at Zalti has

been destroyed by the rebels, that the telegraph wires have been cut and the post stopped in several places, that a large number of men are under arms at Gunib, and that the revolt is no sooner stopped in one place than it breaks out immediately in another; in short, the insurrection would at the present moment appear to embrace not only the country of the Tchechenzes, but also the chief portion of Daghistan, together with the districts of Zakatal and Siguakh, the latter place being about 100 versts distant from Tiflis. A demand has lately been made by the Governor of Kakheti and Tiflis for troops, but there were none available.

For some months past very rigorous measures have been brought to bear on the people of the Tchechenzes, with the view of putting down the insurrection in that part, and arresting Ali Bey, the chief of the movement. Some of the women and children of the Mitsjedgis are said to have been killed by the Russian troops, and numbers of persons of both sexes have been sent into exile.

In the early part of September a part of the tribes of the Dido, the Arbleck, and the Danuk, passed through Petrvosk in a most pitiful condition, on their road to Siberia. Exile, it must be borne in mind, is deemed by these people a far worse punishment than death.

It was hoped that by this system of terrorism the surrender of Ali Bey would have been effected and the rebellion put an end to, but the result has proved the reverse of what was expected; thousands have now gathered round Ali Bey, who is looked upon as a saint, and the people of Daghistan have made common cause with the Tchechenzes. Ali Bey has, it appears, a few guns with him; some of his men are also armed with rifles. He has been joined by a number of deserters from the Russian army and Poles.

In the districts of Loris, Trialet, and Bortshalak—the latter place being no great distance from Tiflis—bands of brigands infest the country, driving away the sheep and cattle. The commander of the troops of the Alazan district, south-east of Tiflis, was, on the 18th ultimo, attacked in his house, and stabbed by an assassin. He was saved through the thickness of the plate on his helmet; the assassin has escaped.

At the head of these bands of brigands is a certain Mir Ali. This personage is a Tartar Bey. Like Deli Agha, also a Tartar Bey, and celebrated in this country as a high-wayman, he takes, generally speaking, from the rich, and seldom from the poor; hence he has acquired great influence with many in the interior.

At the present moment his actions may be looked upon as proceeding more from political motives than anything else.

Near Abbas Tumon, and in the Akhalzikh district, there is also but little tranquillity, the Adjsharas driving away large quantities of sheep and cattle from Russian territory. Brigandage is often the prelude to insurrection. It is, therefore, not altogether improbable that the movement, which is now more or less confined to the districts near the Terek and Daghistan, will ere long spread to the Tartar districts of the Caucasus. Much will, however, depend on the successes gained by the Turkish army.

Herewith I beg to inclose translations of the telegrams of the 21st, 28th, and 29th of last month.

Much has been written and said about the cruel treatment suffered by the Armenians who returned with General Tergukasoff from Alashkir, and much also about the massacre at Bajazet. As, however, these matters appear to have been related without much regard to truth, I will endeavour to explain some of the circumstances attending them, such as they have been reported to me.

On General Tergukasoff marching from Bajazet towards Erzeroum, he found it necessary to stop at the Convent of Surje Oganez (St. John). Prior, however, to advancing from this place he left a force there of some 200 to 300 Cossacks.

The Superior of the Convent, who is styled Father John, has for years past lived on the most friendly terms with the Kurdish Chiefs; indeed, such was his influence among them, and so great was the respect entertained for him, that he was often called upon to stand as guardian to their children. The same friendship was also manifested by these Kurds to the Christians in the adjoining villages, and no one complained of ill-treatment or molestation.

After the departure of General Tergukasoff, Father John recommended the above-mentioned Cossacks to leave, telling them that if the Mussulmans chose to fall on them they would be certain to be killed. Seeing their critical situation the Cossacks, after some time, abandoned the Convent, and proceeded in the direction taken by their General. They soon fell in with the retreating column of the Russians, and were ordered to return at once and take possession of the Convent of Surje Oganez.

In the meantime Father John had called in a number of Kurds, and placed them as a guard in the Convent. The Cossacks, on their return, entered the Convent, killed some

of the Kurds, and drove the others away. This act was of itself quite sufficient to bring down the vengeance of the Kurdish Chiefs, not only on the Superior of the Convent, but also on the whole Christian community of Alashkir. The Father felt his conduct would be looked upon as treacherous; he knew his life was in danger. Accordingly he determined to leave the Convent, and advised the Christians in the vicinity to return with General Tergukasoff to Russian territory.

Thus it happened that the Christian population, about 3,500 in number, emigrated from Alashkir. Most of these people are, I am told, now desirous of returning again to their lands and homes.

I am also informed that there was nothing in the shape of a massacre at Bayazid; some few of the Christian inhabitants there were killed by the Kurds, and the town was pillaged. The number of persons killed by the Kurds is reported to be 12 to 15; a proof also that the inhabitants of that place have not been all destroyed is the return of the chief portion of them to Bayazid and the villages in the vicinity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

Note.—The number of families that arrived in this country from Turkey is 800; of these about 160 families are Kurds (Yezids).

On their first arrival at Igdyr, in Russian territory, they were robbed of more than one-half of their cattle. Out of the 800 above mentioned families, 500 families, who are wealthy and who refused to receive any portion of the subscription sent them from Tiflis, are anxious to return to their homes, having been, as they themselves state, far better off in Turkey than they are in Russia.

Inclosure in No. 11.

(Translation.) *Karajal, September* 21, 1877.

THE revolt in Daghistan, which commenced with an attack on the Georgiedsky Bridge, rapidly extended over nearly the whole Gunib district. On the 11th instant the insurgents attacked our detachments in different points.

By a simultaneous movement of our troops and militia from the neighbouring districts and Shura, also of the detachment under Colonel Nakashidze, the extension of the revolt was stopped on the 20th instant, but not without resistance. The auls situated at Karakoisu have tendered their submission.

Our losses are twenty-seven killed and wounded.

(Telegraphic.) *Karajal, September* $\frac{19}{26}$, 1877.

The agitation, which was stopped in the Gunib district, has extended since the 21st to the Kazi Kumuch and a part of the Dargin districts. The district of Kumuch having been attacked, the Administration was upset. On this occasion Colonel Tchember, some employés of the Administration, and about 50 soldiers, were killed.

Since the 23rd the agitation has commenced in the south of Daghistan, where the Kaitach have revolted. The rebels were defeated by the detachments of Prince Nakashidze and Ter Asatouroff, about 6,000 of them having been routed and destroyed at the aul called Lavashi. Since this the rebellion in middle Daghistan has nearly ceased. The troops are directed to march to the Kaitach district, where necessary measures are taken to secure quiet in South Daghistan. During all this our losses have been—killed, 5 soldiers and 2 officers; wounded, 40 soldiers.

(Telegraphic.) *Karajal, September* 27, 1877.

The rebels who were overthrown on the 23rd September at the aul Lavashi have been completely routed on the 24th at the village of Koutishi by the irregular sotnias under Nakashidze. This is of great importance as regards the pacification of the Dargin district in Central Daghistan.

Four Commanders of sotnias killed and six men wounded.

No. 12.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 3.)

(No. 168. Political.) *Belgrade, November* 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a translation of a Decree of the Prince of Servia, dated a couple of days ago, and which appeared this morning, by which the Budget of last year continues in force for the current financial year until the 31st December next.

The financial year commences this day, viz., the 1st November (o.s.).

According to law the Budget ought to have been voted by the Legislative Assembly, and it is evident that the Government have no inclination of meeting that body at the present moment; they have, therefore, availed themselves on this occasion of the extraordinary powers conferred on the Executive by Article 56 of the Constitution.

That Articles is as follows:—

"Dans le seul cas où la sûreté de l'Etat serait gravement menacée, soit à l'extérieur, soit à l'intérieur, et où l'Assemblée Nationale ne se trouverait pas réunie, le Prince peut, sur la proposition du Conseil des Ministres, prendre les mesures nécessaires, alors même que l'assentiment de l'Assemblée devrait être requis, et ces décisions auront force de loi; mais à la réunion suivante de l'Assemblée, cette loi rendue ainsi extraordinaire sera soumise à son approbation.

"Néanmoins, dans aucun cas on ne peut ni établir un nouvel impôt ou contribution générale, ni modifier les impôts existants, sans l'approbation de l'Assemblée Nationale."

Unless this Government look forward to an interruption of the peace by Servia there is no means of accounting for the exercise of these discretionary powers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Provisional Decree concerning the Budget.

(Translation.)

WHEREAS the current year 1876-77 is drawing to a close, and the Session of the National Assembly for the present year is not yet convoked so as to enable it to vote the Budget of income and expenditure for the new financial year 1877-78, and, whereas it is necessary not to delay enforcing the same Budget, we have, on the recommendation of our Ministers, and in accordance with Article 56 of the Constitution, decreed as follows:—

The different authorities will apply for the future financial year 1877-78 exactly the same Budget as has been in force during 1876-77 up to such a time as the National Assembly is convoked and shall have voted a new Budget, but in any case not longer than the expiration of the present astronomical year.

Our Finance Minister and other Ministers are to carry out the present Decree.

Given at Belgrade this the 28th day of October (o.s.), 1877.

(Signatures of Prince and Ministers.)

No. 13.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 3.)

(No. 171. Political.) *Belgrade, November* 16, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Belgrade Brigade of Militia is to assemble here on the 19th instant, and that this measure is supposed to be the prelude of a general mobilization; until, however, this proposed inspection is over, it is impossible to say what Prince Milan intends doing next.

Russian pecuniary subsidies are coming in, and there is evidence that the intention of acting in connexion with Russian military movements below Widdin is at the bottom of all this. The weather continues splendid, and it is supposed that the Servian aggressive

movement, on account of which the Porte was alarmed last week, may still come off later, possibly next week if circumstances are more favourable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 14.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 173. Political.)
Belgrade, November 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had several times occasion to mention to your Lordship that there was a very strong feeling amongst political men here disapprobatory of any intention on the part of this Government to renew hostilities against the Porte during this war. I have, however, expressed as my impression that I was not sanguine that these opinions were likely to exercise any influence on the designs patronised here by Russia, or that the Opposition could attain a proper organization.

These forebodings are about to be realized, and the language of the Opposition has suddenly been modified; all the prominent men here have become either converted into supporting the war, or have been silenced.

I have reason to believe that this result has been accomplished by M. Persiany, who, as the new Russian Agent here, has induced all the leading politicians to waive their former objections, either out of deference and respect for the Emperor of Russia, or through reliance on His Majesty's assurances of a more brilliant future for their country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 15.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 174. Political.)
Belgrade, November 20, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the accompanying copy of a despatch on the subject of Servian projects. (Forwarded by post in cypher.)

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 15.

Consul-General White to Mr. Layard.

Belgrade, November 20, 1877.

Sir,

RUSSIAN engagement includes, besides monthly subsidies actually coming in, promise to recognize Servian independence at peace, and to secure accession of territory from Widdin to Nisch, and thence over Old Servia, viz., towards Montenegrin frontier to Sievitza. Bosnia to be left out and dealt with at Austrian convenience.

With regard to independence, Austrian views decidedly favourable, although this may be denied at Constantinople; indeed, all my colleagues, without exception, look upon it as the positive result of this war, but Prince Milan and his Foreign Minister, notwithstanding Russian pressure, do not feel disposed to proclaim independence.

They no longer conceal their determination to march into Turkish territory as soon as Russian army will be in a position to advance so as to co-operate. Precise date cannot be calculated beforehand, though it is said that the day cannot be far off.

It may be, however, that the weather or operations of Mehemet Ali Pasha will force them to postpone further realization of these hostile schemes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 16.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

No. 176. Political.)
Belgrade, November 22, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is reported here that M. Christitch, the Servian Agent at Constantinople, has been instructed by M. Ristitch to read a communication to the Foreign Minister, dated, I believe, the 5th instant, in which he answers various accusations of the Porte in a tone which looks as if it was assumed preparatory to an intended rupture.

I have no confirmation of this from Her Majesty's Ambassador, but I have every reason to believe this step to be accurately reported, and it only bears out what I have been expecting for a long time, i.e., that it is in contemplation to employ a Servian force to co-operate with those of Russia and Roumania.

As a movement of troops of the latter country is reported this morning in the direction of Widdin, this leads me to look upon a Servian aggression as imminent.

The Russian Representative here has, I am assured, given a variety of assurances to Prince Milan, and amongst these, I am told, that he has lately stated that there was no ground to fear a Turkish irruption on the side of Bosnia in case of war; this certainly cannot have any meaning unless his Government expects that Austria intends occupying that province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 17.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 177. Political.)
Belgrade, November 23, 1877.

My Lord,

SOME time ago a good deal was said about Prince Kara George, the Pretender to this Principality. His adherents were supposed to be stirring, and a project was attributed to the Porte of supporting him as a rival to Prince Milan in case the latter resorted to disloyal acts. It was added that the Pretender would be more agreeable both to Turkey and to Austria, as he was supposed to be less Russian.

I never attached much value to these alleged plans, as the Pretender is so discredited by his low habits and by his connection with the murderers of the late Prince Michel of Servia, that his chances cannot be very great.

In the meantime, however, he was induced to go to Bucharest and there offer his services to the Emperor of Russia, thus showing his readiness to throw over his alleged Turkish proclivities. Some weeks elapsed before it was known here that his services in the Imperial army had been refused, and the threat may have exercised proper pressure on Prince Milan, who was informed a few days ago of the fact of their rejection by the Emperor by a telegram sent to the Russian Agent here by Prince Gortchakow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 18.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 430. Confidential.)
Berlin, November 26, 1877.

My Lord,

IN the course of a conversation I had to-day with Herr von Bülow, his Excellency asked what impressions I had brought from England in regard to a future settlement of the Eastern question.

I said that I was not in a position to tell him with any approach to precision what conditions of peace Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to sanction. But my private and personal impression was that while Her Majesty's Government would be willing in the general interest of European peace to entertain any fair and equitable arrangement between the belligerents for the improvement of the condition of European Turkey, they would not, in my opinion, be prepared to admit of any modifications of the

existing regulations regarding the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles which would give exclusive privileges to Russia to the detriment of other Powers, nor would they sanction, I thought, any administrative measures in Bulgaria calculated to threaten the future independence of the Porte.

Herr von Bülow said that Count Münster wrote very much under the same impression as myself.

The German Government, his Excellency went on to say, were not acquainted with the conditions on which either Russia or Turkey would be willing to treat for peace. They wished to keep aloof on strictly neutral principles, and would only consent to take part in an attempt at mediation if pressed to do so by both belligerents and the Powers more directly concerned in Eastern affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 19.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 843.)
My Lord,

Vienna, November 17, 1877.

I WAS informed to-day at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that a telegram had just been received from Baron Roditch, stating that a report had reached Zara that Antivari was taken last night by the Montenegrins. As intelligence previously received represented the garrison to be extremely weak, the truth of the report is considered probable.

I was informed at the same time that, as the light-house on the coast near the town has ceased to be lighted, the authorities at the Austrian ports have been instructed to make this public.

I am told also that Antivari is nearly three miles from the sea, and that there is nothing which can be called a harbour in communication with the town; and, as far as I can ascertain, Count Andrassy is not disposed to interfere at present with the progress of the Montenegrin military operations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 20.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 845.)
My Lord,

Buda-Pesth, November 21, 1877.

IN a conversation which I had to-day with Count Andrassy on the subject of the recent successes of the Montenegrins, his Excellency said that, however much he might disapprove of them, it would be extremely difficult for the Austrian Government to intervene at present to arrest them.

It was, however, one thing to make conquests and another to keep them, and Prince Nicholas was carrying on hostilities from which he had nothing to gain, as he had been told before he commenced them, that he must not expect, on the restoration of peace, to obtain a greater increase of territory than the Porte had been recommended by the Conference to grant to him.

On my speaking at the same time to his Excellency of the new levies which the Turkish Government have ordered to reinforce their armies, he said that it did not appear from the reports of his Agents, that Asia Minor was likely to furnish any important addition to the Turkish forces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 21.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 851. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Buda-Pesth, November 23, 1877.

COUNT ANDRASSY informed me to-day, when speaking of the possible issue of the war in Turkey, that Count Zichy appears to apprehend that Russia may be able to

conclude a separate peace with the Porte. His Excellency is, however, of opinion that such an eventuality is extremely improbable, as the position of the Turkish Government is not the same as in 1829, and at the date of the Treaty of Vukiar Skelessi, and that they could not now treat with Russia without consulting the Parliament as to the terms of peace. He attached no importance, therefore, to Russia taking the initiative in the matter, and even if she should act with bad faith in concluding peace without the consent of Europe, he could not believe that she would impose terms on the Porte to which England and Austria would object, as no arrangement to which they would not assent could be maintained.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 22.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 3.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 27 Novembre, 1877.

VOUS n'ignorez pas que, dans le but de faire face à l'ennemi puissant qui a envahi notre territoire, nous avons dû diriger vers les points les plus menacés la plus grande partie de nos troupes et dégarnir momentanément les districts voisins du Monténégro. Les Monténégrins, profitant de l'impunité que semblait leur assurer cette situation, ont donné à leur entreprise de brigandage et de dévastation une extension aussi lâche que cruelle.

Si le Monténégro a cru pouvoir tirer quelque avantage de pareils actes aussi illégitimes que barbares, il s'est étrangement trompé, car la Sublime Porte déclare hautement qu'il ne pourrait jamais s'en prévaloir pour se procurer un bénéfice quelconque.

Je vous prie de faire connaître au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères les idées et les intentions du Gouvernement Impérial à cet égard, et d'appeler son attention sur les suites des entreprises actuelles du Monténégro, qui ne sauraient, nous en sommes convaincus, recevoir l'approbation du Gouvernement près duquel vous êtes accrédité.

No. 23.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, December 3, 1877.

WITH regard to Servia, militia gradually but slowly concentrating for action on the frontier.

Districts on the Bosnian frontier, however, left greatly unprotected.

Final determination as to aggression still in suspension.

No. 24.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 378. Confidential.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, December 3, 1877.

THE Italian Ambassador having called upon me this afternoon to speak on other topics, I thought it right to make some reference to a statement confidentially made by M. Tricoupi to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Athens (which the latter had reported yesterday by telegraph), to the effect that, in the event of an Austrian occupation of Bosnia, Italy would proceed to occupy Northern Albania. I therefore told his Excellency that such a report had reached Her Majesty's Government, but without specifying the source from which it came; and I inquired whether there was any foundation for it.

General Menabrea told me, in reply, that he was not aware of any such intention on the part of his Government, that the report was contrary to what he believed himself to know of their views. He stated, however, that, as he had told me on previous occasions, the occupation by Austria of any large tract of Turkish territory at the back of the strip which she now held along the east coast of the Adriatic would, in the opinion of the Italian Government and people, materially alter the relative military positions of Austria and Italy.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 25.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 53.) *Tunis, November 27, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to submit herewith inclosed some notes on the reforms that have been carried out in Turkey, both before and after the Crimean war.

My apology for presuming to enter upon a subject regarding which there is such a great divergence of opinion, is a simple one. With a single exception I am now the oldest public servant in active service in the Ottoman dominions, and, as such, I trust I may be forgiven if, in the present critical juncture, I deem it almost an imperative duty to draw attention to the past and present condition of the Turkish Empire for the purpose of showing the great improvements which have taken place during the last half century, over which my knowledge of Turkish affairs extends.

Entrusted by Her Majesty's Representatives at the Porte with missions in Syria, Mesopotamia, Irak, Bagdad, Kurdistan, and Asia Minor, I have had ample opportunities of acquiring information respecting the organization of the Empire, the feelings, the wants, and the condition of the various races and creeds which constitute its population, and which information enables me now to compare the past with the actual state of things.

I have especially dwelt upon the Islamitic Law in order to disprove the erroneous impressions generally entertained that the Ottoman Government cannot fulfil its promises of reform, on the ground that those reforms are in themselves at variance with the precepts of the Koran, in consequence of which its non-Mussulman subjects cannot be placed upon a footing of equality with their Mussulman countrymen; that they cannot enjoy the same rights and immunities, and that the intolerance of Islamism is not only a bar to religious liberty, but likewise to progress and civilization, it being adverse to the acquirement of knowledge.

In refutation of these and similar assertions, I have had recourse to the "Fetwa" recently published by the Sheikh-ul-Islam of the Regency of Tunis, which is a legal decision based upon an authoritative exposition of the teaching and spirit of the Koran, as well as its most celebrated commentators, who distinctly explain the relations it imposes upon Mussulmans to maintain towards non-Mussulmans placed under their protection; the duties of the Sovereign towards all his subjects, without distinction of class or creed, and their inalienable right to be consulted and to participate in the Government in all that concerns their interests, their religion, and the general welfare of the Empire.

According, therefore, to the exposition of the Islamitic law by the most eminent jurisconsults, the reforms adopted by the Ottoman Government, including the present Representative system, so far from being in opposition to its tenets, are in perfect accord with its maxims and principles, a circumstance which is not unworthy of public attention at the present moment.

With these few remarks as to their scope and object, I venture to submit my notes on Turkish reforms for your Lordship's consideration.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 25.

Notes by Mr. Wood on the Reforms introduced and carried out in the Ottoman Dominions.

IN order to be better able to appreciate and form an opinion with regard to the progressive reforms which have been carried out in the Ottoman Dominions since 1840, and more especially since the Crimean war (1856), in fulfilment of the promises of the Sublime Porte, it is necessary to take a retrospective view of the condition of the Empire previous to the above-mentioned dates.

It was almost the invariable system of the Turks, or Osmanlis as they call themselves, to be distinguished from the other races which have adopted Islamism, to recognize and respect the institutions which they found in the countries they conquered, on which sought their alliance and protection.

They only exacted a capitation tax, which entitled the inhabitants, according to the precepts of the Koran, to the full enjoyment of their lives, honour, and property, with the sole exception of pagans and idolaters, who were not included in the "Ahel-el-Kitab," or people who possessed a book (a divine revelation) like the Israelites and Christian.

This system, however good and tolerant in principle, had the practical effect of preventing unity. The various nations and races which constituted the Empire preserved their languages and creeds, their habits, superstitions, as well as their jealousies and hatred of each other.

The only precaution which the Ottomans deemed it advisable to take to secure their conquests was the appointment in Asia Minor of "Dery Beys," Chiefs to whom the guard of certain valleys and border territories were confided, and "Timars," or military fiefs. In Europe they formed the famous corps of the Janissaries, which originally was mostly composed of young Christian renegades, belonging to good families, whose robust and warlike disposition procured for them numerous and exclusive privileges. This circumstance induced Mussulmans of every class throughout the Empire to enroll themselves in this corps in order to enjoy the almost unlimited immunities and protection which it afforded, until it became so formidable as to be in a position to command the Government itself; hence the gross abuses and disorders which gradually crept into the Administration.

So vast an Empire, comprising within itself such heterogeneous and conflicting elements, could not be long administered by mere Dery Beys and Timarigis; and when the Sultans finally seated themselves on the throne of the effeminate Byzantine Emperors, they had recourse to the appointment of Pashas for the provinces, in the hope that, through them, they would be better able to govern their unruly and insubordinate subjects.

Be it on account of the great distances or the lack of regular communications between the centre of Government and the provinces, the Pashas were invested with full powers, with the understanding, however, that these powers were to be exercised within the limits prescribed by the Chery, or Mussulman civil and religious law.

It is needless to inquire whether they complied with their instructions. Having no regular troops to support them, they were compelled to govern through the very Dery Beys and Timarigis whom they were sent to control, and were in their turn controlled by the Janissaries, who belonged and formed part of the population, which latter class was in turn influenced by the Ulemas, or Doctors of Ecclesiastical Law.

Long experience has shown that what was originally intended to produce a better state of things opened the door, in the course of time, to innumerable abuses. The isolation and impotency of the Pashas compelled them to ally themselves with the strongest provincial party, to participate in their intrigues, to share their rapacity and corruption, to abet their animosities, and to pamper to their fanaticism.

The Pashas were the only authorities who, at rare intervals, corresponded with the Central Government, and as they abstained from rendering a faithful account of their administration, it possessed no means of knowing the truth.

One, however, of the greatest evils to be recorded may be found in the position which the Ulemas assumed throughout the Empire.

The Koran being a religious as well as a political code, be it from ignorance and bigotry, or more probably from ambitious and interested motives, they succeeded in giving to the Ottoman Government a purely theocratic character. The Sultans, as successors to the Caliphate, were styled and considered by them to be the shadow of God upon Earth, and under this Imperial shadow they established their own almost unrestricted power and ascendancy by inciting the religious ardour and enthusiasm of the Mussulmans against the non-Mussulmans, for the express purpose of keeping them in an abject condition, with the exception, however, of such fractions of the non-Mussulmans as occupied the mountainous districts, where they defended their freedom with arms in their hands. They pretended to ignore the rights and privileges which the Caliph Omar had conceded by a solemn covenant to the Christians on the taking of Jerusalem. It is true that the Christians were at all times allowed the free exercise of their religion, but they were precluded from the performance of any of its rights in public. They could not construct new churches without a special authority from the Porte. Their spiritual Chiefs were vested with community, and although their "Berats" or Imperial Exequaturs conferred upon them both ecclesiastical and civil power over their respective communities, yet under the then system of administration they could not effectually exercise it without meeting with opposition from all classes of the Mussulman population.

The foregoing brief sketch will convey some slight idea of the disorders, abuses, and anarchy that existed during a period of nearly 900 years. Justice, as administered in the Mehkemés, the only civil and religious Tribunals then in existence, became a marketable commodity.

Non-Mussulman evidence was not admitted by them as against Mussulmans, a circumstance to which is due the introduction of false witnesses. Peculation, malversation of the public revenues, bribery, and every species of corruption were practised unrestrained

by all, Mussulmans as well as by Christians and Israelites, to the fullest extent of their respective powers of wrong doing.

The Empire was threatened with ruin and even with dissolution, when Sultan Selim attempted its reorganization, but he fell a victim to the all-powerful Janissaries, who would permit no modification in the pernicious system of administration, which they had so largely contributed to establish by their lawlessness.

More fortunate than Selim, Sultan Mahmoud succeeded in destroying in 1826 this formidable body of men throughout his dominions, and replaced them by a regular army. He was thus enabled to subdue the quasi-independent Dery Beys, and to deprive the Timariots of their military fiefs, which they had not only turned to their exclusive advantage, but had even, in some instances, placed their forces at the disposal of Pashas who had rebelled against their Sovereign.

It was reserved, by the untimely death of Sultan Mahmoud, to his son Abdul Medjid to proclaim, in 1839, the Hatti-Cherif or Charter, which granted equal political, civil, and religious rights to all the subjects of the Empire, without distinction of race and religion. It peremptorily abolished the power of life and death and the confiscation of property hitherto vested in the Pashas. It ordained that trials should be public, and above all, that no criminal should suffer death, under any circumstances whatsoever, without the warrant of the Sovereign, which could not be obtained without the transmission of the preliminary proceedings to Constantinople, to be submitted to a judicial inquiry or examination, according to the prescriptions of the law; and any functionary who transgressed this Ordinance subjected himself to capital punishment, irrespective of his rank and position.

It would be a work of supererogation to examine separately all the clauses of this new political organization. It will suffice to say that it guaranteed the lives, honour, and property of all the inhabitants of the Empire. With a view to develope the principles of religious and political liberty, the Constitution authorized the formation of institutions and the enactment of laws for their support. It enforced the public avowal of the Government personally responsible for their acts. It systematized the conscription, the repression and collection of taxes. It confirmed the abolition of slavery, of monopolies, as well as the system of leasing out the public revenues, which afforded facilities for extortion on the part of greedy and rapacious farmers.

The principles laid down by the Hatti-Sherriff were a complete subversion of the Government system hitherto in vogue. It was hailed with joy by some; it was sullenly resisted by others, who saw in it the destruction of their arbitrary power and of the means of amassing wealth. Others, again, were overawed by the responsibility thus thrown upon them, many dreaded the loss of Mussulman supremacy, and could not brook, from religious fanaticism, their being placed upon a footing of equality with Jews and Giaours upon whom they were accustomed to look as inferiors.

When we consider what in most many continental nations, more advanced in civilization, to improve their institutions, it leaves our surprise if the radical change of those to which the Mahommedans were habituated for ages and the substitution of others in place, and those others imagined by many to be borrowed from Christian nations, should not with opposition, or should have been ill understood. Such a state of feeling would have a natural tendency to retard the execution of the primarily stipulations.

The enemies of Turkish rule in Europe cannot deny now, but before and after the Crimean war, many reforms of a radical nature have been promulgated by the Ottoman Government in conformity with its promises to the States of Europe, but this assertion is generally met by the assertion that the reforms in question are a dead letter, and their execution impossible or impracticable owing to their being averse in opposition to the spirit and contrary to the tenets of the great theocratic law, prevalent not only in Turkey, but in all Mussulman countries. Two questions, therefore (and these of no little interest at the present juncture), present themselves for our consideration.

First, are or are not the reforms introduced by the Turkish Government for the benefit of its subjects in accordance or otherwise with the religious law of the Mahommedan faith?

Secondly, what is the nature of these reforms, are they, or are they not, sufficient to make on the promises given by Turkey to the nations of Europe, and have they, or have they not, been duly carried out?

In entering, first, on the consideration of the dogmas of the theocratic law in regard to the relations of Mussulmans and non-Mussulmans, and interestially the practicability or otherwise of liberal reforms with a due regard to its tenets, the task is considerably lightened by the annexed "Fetwa" by the Sheikh-ul-Islam of the Regency of Tunis, Sheikh Ahmed-el-Hodja, and one of the most distinguished and learned Doctors of

Divinity and ecclesiastical law of the Mussulman world. It is a legal decision based upon an authoritative exposition of the teaching and spirit of the Koran regarding matters of law and religion. The "Fetwa" is, therefore, worthy of attention and study from the legal position which its author occupies, who would never have ventured to give it publicity in the Arabic newspapers that have a wide circulation in Turkey and in India were it not in perfect accord with the precepts of Islam which the "Fetwa" explains.

After expressing his regret that principles should be attributed to the Mahommedan religion (chetiyah) which are contrary to its maxims, he distinctly says that the fundamental law of Islam, in obedience to the Divine precept, "is to do good and avoid evil. It commands concord, the abnegation of the human passions, and the union of all in the pursuit of virtue, piety, and the triumph of truth."

It must be remembered that the Koran is no less religious than a political code: and Sheikh Ahmed, in quoting the law relative to the attributes of the "Imam" or Sovereign, invested with the supreme executive power, asserts that, according to the Divine Ordinances, the Sovereign is bound to exercise his authority for the general interest of the Mussulmans, and every act injurious to those interests is essentially null. Hence arises the necessity of a control, which is confirmed by the words of the Prophet: "Have among you a people who preach good and hinder evil;" and as all Mussulmans are not in a position to worthily execute this duty, the Almighty indicates by the word people a class or a community which, by its enlightenment, can guide others, point out errors and dangers, and indicate the most useful measures in the interest of the country and of religion.

The councillors of the Sovereign, selected from a class of experienced and trustworthy politicians, statesmen, and administrators, of learned men in science and letters, include likewise non-Mussulmans (Christians and Israelites), it being a precept of the Mahommedan religion that those who are under its protection have equal rights and equal duties to perform, inasmuch as, like the true believers, they have the same object in view, namely, to establish concord and harmony in order that, by the union of all, the Empire may prosper and become powerful, without which it would be exposed to serious dangers."

After citing the precepts inculcated by the Koran with reference to the rights of non-Mussulmans, the Sheikh-ul-Islam says: "If attention be paid to what we have stated, they will be convinced that the Sovereign should be surrounded by councillors; and this duty cannot be decided without being in accordance with the teaching of our Law. Let it not, therefore, be thought that the presence in our Councils of a certain number of non-Mussulmans, living under our protection, to defend their own interests, to aid us with their advice, is not contrary to the spirit of our law. Non-Mussulmans will assist at our Councils as the representatives of their co-religionists and as the defenders of their rights and interests; and they even possess the right to defend the interests of the Mussulmans, to discuss their affairs, to represent them civilly, and to appear for them in the Courts of Justice." In support of this exposition of the law, he cites the example of the Prophet.

Sheikh Ahmed then proceeds to expound the duties of Mussulmans towards non-Mussulmans.

"The protection which we owe to non-Mussulmans under our authority necessarily carries with it the duty for us to hear their complaints and to pay attention to every matter that concerns their interests." Koraby and Bastu, two celebrated commentators, say: "The protection which we accord imposes upon us certain duties towards those to whom we have accorded it, because they are placed under the Faith of God, of his Prophet, and of Islam. If the enemies who invade our territory attack our non-Mussulman subjects, we must run to their assistance, and die in their defence, in order to maintain the faith, which is due to those we protect. To neglect their defence would be a violation of the pact of God. We must treat with humanity their weak, succour the poor, nourish their hungry, clothe their naked, speak to them mildly and with affability, support the inconveniences arising from their presence amongst us, not from fear, but out of generosity, aid them with our advice on all occasions, guard and defend their families, their property, and their honour, all their rights and interests, and, in short, to act in our relations with them as generous protectors towards the protected."

We may deduce two facts from the foregoing analysis: first, that if the Mahommedan religion inculcated intolerance, it would not have provided for non-Mussulman councillors to give advice to the Sovereign, to discuss the affairs of their Mussulman countrymen, and, above all, to defend the interests of their co-religionists; and, secondly, that the introduction of Christian and Israelites in the various provincial Councils and Courts, pursuant to the recent Administrative reforms, far from being at variance, is in accordance with the precepts of the Koran.

Mussaby, an ecclesiastical lawyer of great repute among Mahommedans, in explain-

ing the fundamental principles of the Constitution of Mohammedan States, says, in his work translated into Latin, under the title of "Constitutiones Politicæ," "that the 'Cheryiah' does not prevent a Jew, from occupying any rank in the State, not excepting that of Minister or Vizier." And indeed, in compliance with this principle, many Christians of known political sagacity have been named to foreign Courts to represent the Sultan in matters of the utmost delicacy and moment, connected at times with the very integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

In examining the Mussulman jurisprudence, which treats of general principles, it will be found, that the sweat creation of a Parliament is in perfect conformity with the Islamitic Law, as explained by two of its most eminent expounders, Abou-el-Arabi and Imam Saad-el-Din Tetazany. The former distinctly states that "the duty of taking counsel is the basis of the law, and a rule to be observed by every one, without distinction or exception, from the Prophet himself down to the least of men;" and the latter, in his work entitled "Explanations of Convictions," confirms the principle. After affirming that the law does not admit of the co-existence of two Sovereigns, completely independent of each other, he goes on to say, "that the collective exercise of sovereign power by several individuals has nothing contrary to the unity of the State, since the members, acting and deliberating collectively, do not represent nor constitute in reality more than one Sovereign power." He is followed, in his political doctrine, by such jurisconsults as El-Gazali, Assam-el-Din, and Abd-el-Akim, all of whom prove that the intervention of the people in the affairs of the State, which concern the general interest, is not only legitimate but forms a fundamental law of Islam.

It is true that, in more recent times, the Sultans have assumed and exercised absolute Power. In thus acting, they have set aside the precepts of the Koran as expounded by its ablest commentators, and they have given rise to the popular but erroneous belief, that the gross abuses which have crept, for the last 150 years, into the administration of the Ottoman Empire, are due to the restricted and intolerant laws of Islam, whereas they impose sacred duties upon the Sovereign. Above all these duties, the Prophet places the impartial administration of justice, which he pronounces to be "the glory of faith: it is the greatness of the Sovereign and the palladium of the peoples" and Ibn Khaldoun, in his work entitled "Maxims for Sovereigns," includes among the principal qualities with which Princes must be endowed, those of developing the prosperity of the country, of protecting the rights of private individuals, whether they are Mussulmans or not, and of securing the safety of all their subjects without distinction.

The fundamental principle of our law, says General Hussein, in his recent reply to Reuvell, "is that every act of the Sovereign, even his wants and liberalities, must tend to, and be based on, the public good." In support of his statement, he quotes Ibn Nujeim, who asserts, in his work "Kehibe" "that the acts of the 'Imam' must tend solely to the public interest, and must be only obeyed when they are in conformity with this principle. When they are contrary to the public good, no obedience is due to them." Such theories, publicly professed by a functionary holding a high official rank in a Mohammedan Government, and shared by every reflecting man in Tunis, show what the tendencies of public opinion are now-a-days among the educated Mussulmans, and deserve, on this account, our attention.

"The Sovereign," affirms the author of a well known law book called "El Mihr" (the Sea), "must manage the public revenue as, if it was the money of wards and orphans." The Caliphs Abou Beke, Omar-ben-Elkhattab, Osman, and Aly held and practiced the same views; and exemplified, by the austerity and abnegation of their lives, what is the real spirit of the Prophet's law.

A failure in the performance of the duties above described carries with it the penalty of dethronement, of which we have had a very recent example in the deposition of the late Sultan Abdul-Aziz, in compliance with the Islamitic law, upon which was based the "Fewa," or legal decision of the Sheikh-ul-Islam.

Enlightened Mussulmans do not deny that a certain class of Ulemas have encouraged, within comparatively modern times, the Sultans to assume despotic sway over their subjects. On this point they concur with Sheikh Ibrahim, who attributes the disorders that have occurred, not to the pretended insufficiency of the Islamitic law, but to the ignorance and errors of those Ulemas who, without taking any notice of its spirit, have given to it the narrowest possible interpretation with the intention, he asserts, "to curtail that which God has bountifully given; in consequence of which they have urged political leaders, through despotic motives, to violate the politico-religious law, instead of seeking prescriptions and limits by which it might be established."

To this circumstance may be traced the impression generally entertained in Europe, that as religious progress, equality, and liberty, are incompatible with the teaching and

maxims of the Koran, the efforts of the Ottoman Government, in this direction, are simply a delusion.

Were it so, we should be called upon to abandon once for all every hope of seeing, or improvement in the condition, both of the Mussulman and non-Mussulman subjects of the Porte, and to view its promises as illusory, and deliberately intended to deceive the good faith of Christendom. Such, however is not the case.

With reference to that part of the law which relates exclusively to religion or to the faith, the most eminent jurisconsults agree that that part alone is absolute, and cannot be modified; but with respect to the political, or that portion which regards the Administration, Ammar-ben-Abdoul-Aziz lays it down as a maxim, "that politics as well as practical jurisprudence must vary according to time and circumstances."

In support of this maxim Abou Akil declares it to be "a great mistake and an unjust censure of the doctrines of the Prophet's followers, and of the times they have constantly pursued, if it be supposed that the Government cannot exercise any temporal power beyond what is prescribed by the 'Cheriyah' and must stop where it is silent." And Abou-el-Kayem develops it still further in his analysis of practical jurisprudence, by his affirmation "that the temporal law of God is to be found wherever paths (that is means) leading to the discovery of truth, to the application of justice, from whatever source they are derived, be it from the law itself or from human knowledge, for it would be contrary to his Divine goodness to suppose that, having pointed out a few of those paths, he intended it to prohibit all others."

Treating on the same subject, El-Kurafy asserts, "That the pretension of applying laws based upon customs that have ceased to exist, or to such acts as result from a new state of things, is derived from ignorance, since every jurisprudence, based upon customs and habits, must change with them according to the maxims universally recognized by the wisest jurisconsults."

It has been frequently stated that the Mahomedan nation cannot advance in civilization so long as it adheres to the Koran which is adverse to the acquirement of scientific knowledge. This popular error is amply refuted by its own early history; by the works of its celebrated authors on a variety of subjects, and by their study of the ancient authors, such as Aristotle, Porphyrius, Dio-corides, Euclides, Apollonius, Hyppocrates, Ptolemy, Galen, and others, translations of whose writings they possess. But a reference to the long list of subjects, the study of which is not only authorized but obligatory, in the public educational establishments of the Empire, furnishes an additional proof that Islamism imposes no restrictions upon learning, otherwise the Ottoman Government would never have dared to render compulsory the acquirement of knowledge, in all its branches, in open violation of the religion of its subjects; nor would Turkey and Egypt have sent a considerable number of their youth to be educated in Europe.

It is difficult to account for the impression that Islamism is eminently a religion of the sword. It has been already remarked that the Caliph Omar made a covenant with the Patriarch of Jerusalem, granting protection and immunities to Christians, which have been observed by his successors as well as by the Sultans. Under that covenant large Christian communities have not only lived and prospered under Mahomedan rule, but, in many instances, their material condition is even superior to that of their Mussulman fellow-countrymen.

The Prophet has always made a distinction between "Ahl-el-Kitab," that is, the Christians and Jews who possess the Scriptures, and the idolatrous Arabs, who opposed him, as is shewn by the following passage in the Koran, "and fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you; but transgress not by attacking them first, for God loveth not the aggressors. And kill them wherever ye find them, and turn them out of that where of they have dispossessed you, for temptation to idolatry is more grievous than slaughter; yet fight not against them in the temple (temple of Mecca), until they attack you therein: but if they attack you, slay them there."

It is incorrect, therefore, to attribute the deplorable massacres that have from time to time occurred, to the Ordinances of the Prophet, who, on the contrary, distinctly says, "As to those who have not borne arms against you on account of religion, nor turned you out of your dwellings, God forbiddeth you not to deal kindly with them, and to behave justly towards them, for God loveth those who act justly."

A strict and impartial inquiry would not fail to trace the original cause to foreign enemy, which, for political ends, has fomented each of the quarrels between the different races and creeds to incite them against each other, without calculating that a civil strife between them would degenerate into frightful massacres. This was the case with the Maronites and Druses in Syria, and with the Greeks in Palestine, in both cases the Christians being the aggressors. It is by no means intended to palliate either the atrocities committed or

to exculpate those who took part in them, or who did not use their power to punish the authors, but simply to show that massacres are not authorized by Islam; and even, in respect to idolaters, the penalty of the aggression is mitigated by the ordinance, "But if they desist, then let there be no hostility, except against the ungodly."

Undoubtedly much fanaticism exists among a certain class of Mahommedans; but it is worthy of remark that that fanaticism is to be found, not among the Turks or Ottomans, properly so-called, who form but a fraction of 4,000,000 of the nation, but among the original or indigenous races, who have adopted Islamism after the conquest, but who have not the less retained their national instincts and passions, which they occasionally display by acts of disorder and fierce cruelty towards each other.

It cannot be averred with any degree of truth that their instincts and bigotry are preserved and nourished by the principles they imbibe in the Koran; for, as a matter of fact, with the exception of the Arabs, the converted Kurds, Christians, Macedonians, Schivs, Turcomans, and others, dispersed over the vast Empire, are totally unacquainted with the Arabic language, and are, consequently, unable to read and understand the Koran (translations of which are prohibited) and its commentators, the study of which is confined to the educated class or Ulemas.

Observant travellers, who have visited Asia Minor, where the Turks or Ottomans first settled during the reign of the Seljukian Sultans, will testify to this, as well as to their peaceable and industrious habits, to their hospitality, to their respect for the authorities, and to their toleration and friendly demeanour towards their non-Mussulman countrymen.

Although it would be possible to considerably prolong the detail of these observations, sufficient has been said to show that there is nothing in the letter and spirit of the Mohammedan religion to impede the introduction of reforms, nothing adverse to the acquirement of knowledge in all its branches, nothing which authorizes the practice of cruelties and injustice towards non-Mussulmans. It enjoins, on the contrary, toleration and equal rights and obligations of those who live under its protection, and their participation in the councils of the nation for the welfare and general interest of all.

Nothing, therefore, could rest upon a more solid foundation; and it is as unfair to predict the failure of the reforms promised previous to 1856 and since carried out, on the groundless assumption that they are condemned by the Islamitic Law, as it is unfair to tax the Ottoman Government with insincerity in its laudable efforts to give them effect. It has to contend with many difficulties,—difficulties which in Christian Europe have led to insurrection and bloodshed,—with local and sectarian prejudices, with party feelings, jealousies and hatreds of peoples, some of whom have occupied from time immemorial deserts and mountainous districts, difficult of access, from whence they issue to commit disorders; and, above all, it has to deal with the ignorance of this heterogeneous population.

Nevertheless, the Ottoman Government has not ceased to persevere in its exertions to improve the condition of its subjects. It has abolished the Haratch, or poll-tax, which was paid by the non-Mussulmans, thereby removing the invidious distinction between them and their Mussulman compatriots; it has abolished the penalty of death, which was inflicted upon the latter, who apostatized from their faith, thereby proclaiming the liberty of conscience. And, if any further evidence is required that its exertions have been attended with success; that the Christians enjoy perfect religious freedom; that the administration is not of a nature to sap the resources of the country and to prevent its prosperity, it will be found in the statements of trustworthy English and Russian writers, who affirm, after personal observation, that the peasants of other countries would envy the well-being and comfort of those of Bulgaria, who are well-housed, are rich in gardens, lands, and cattle, and the spires of whose churches are visible in every direction. They add that their condition is even superior to that of the Mussulmans; and since such is the case, it is difficult to accept as well-founded the allegations of oppression, tyranny, and injustice preferred against the Porte by its adversaries, whose partiality, and perhaps feelings of aversion to the Ottoman race, predispose them to receive these allegations with credulity which the Government cannot be held responsible.

Only those who are acquainted with the former condition of Turkey can now form a just estimate of the great changes and ameliorations that have actually taken place, and which they would have thought impossible some years ago. They actually exist, however; and, although much yet remains to be done, requiring time and tranquillity, yet what has been already executed has prepared the way for a Constitutional Government and a Parliament, with reference to which Her Majesty's Representative at Constantinople, whose well-known Parliamentary experience entitles his opinion to respect, says that no public

assembly of the kind in Europe could perhaps show a more respectable, intelligent, and dignified body of men, and which has already given proofs of independence and national feeling.

Such an Assembly offers a guarantee for the more complete organization of the Administration, for the consolidation of the new institutions, for the more perfect union of the various races and creeds, for the remission of the heavy taxes by the introduction of economy; and, in short, for treating the affairs of the nation in a manner in accordance with national wants.

It must not be supposed that because the establishment of a Parliament is in imitation of European nations, that the Mohammedans will look upon it with aversion, for Haroudben-Abbedin, a Doctor of Divinity, distinctly says, "that it is not prohibited to imitate strangers when it is for the benefit of God's creatures."

An additional guarantee is to be found in the rapid formation of a public opinion, which did not exist twenty years ago. It is due to the numerous newspapers and to some periodicals which are published in the Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Armenian, and Bulgarian languages, and which have a wide circulation in the Empire. Besides the publication of matters relating to national affairs, they contain translations from the foreign press of whatever is of public interest with regard to the policy of the European Powers, discoveries, science, the speeches and biography of eminent statesmen, &c.; and, as it is admitted on all hands that the Orientals are endowed by nature with intelligence and a quick perception, these publications have contributed to enlighten and educate the people with an astonishing rapidity. It is not now an uncommon incident to hear shop-keepers, and even people of an inferior class, commenting on articles which have appeared in the "Times," "Daily News," "Débats," "Constitutionnelle," "Indépendance Belge," "L'Italie," and other foreign papers.

Under the foregoing altered circumstances, with the visible and steady progress which the Ottoman Empire is making towards a better order of things, there are no reasonable grounds to despair of its future. It has actually given unmistakable proofs of a vitality, energy, and unity of purpose, which its best well-wishers did not imagine it to possess; and, were European policy to accord to it time and peace, it would recover, with its great resources and with the united intelligence of the upper classes, its ancient prosperity and strength.

Reforms.

Before proceeding to inquire into the reforms, it is necessary to state that each province is divided into sandjaks or districts, subdistricts into cazas or cantons, which latter comprise several mahiyehs or communes.

In the place of an unlimited Pasha vested with the power of life and death to govern arbitrarily, with the sole obligation of remitting an annual fixed tribute to the Central Government, the administration of a province is now confided to a Valy or Governor-General, who is the chief executive authority; to a Defterdar or Inspector of Finance; to a Director of Foreign Affairs, where there are foreign interests in questions to; to a Director of Public Works; to a Superintendent of Agriculture and Commerce; to a Chief Secretary to Government; and to a Chief Magistrate (Mutchahi-Hukkiami Umoiyeh), whose functions consist in examining all the sentences issued by the Cheriyeh (civil and religious courts) previous to their being submitted to the superior judicial authorities at Constantinople.

The foregoing superior officers hold their appointments from the Sultan; and as they correspond direct with the Ministers and with the Sheikh ul-Islam, to whose Department they belong, they act as a check upon each other.

These officers form conjointly with four other members, two of whom are elected by the Mussulmans, and two by the non-Mussulman population, the Administrative Council, presided over by the Vali, which takes cognizance of all administrative matters within the jurisdiction of the provinces; but is debarred from any intervention in judicial affairs, the cognizance of which solely appertains to the High Court of Justice sitting in the capital of each province.

This latter Court is composed of three elected Mussulman and three non-Mussulman members, and is presided by the Chief Magistrate. It judges civil and criminal cases as well as disputes relating to real and personal property; but it is precluded from trying cases between Mussulmans themselves, such as marriages, divorces, the administration of the property of minors, &c., the cognizance of which appertains to the "Cheriy," or civil and religious Courts, as well as cases between non-Mussulmans, which come more directly under the jurisdiction of the Spiritual Chiefs of the Christian and Israelite communities.

Notwithstanding that the High Court of Justice is presided over by the Chief Magistrate, its proceedings are watched and examined by a Delegate, specially deputed by the Porte, as a further guarantee for their regularity, who submits its decisions for execution to the Governor-General, provided they do not exceed the powers accorded to him by law, otherwise they are referred to Constantinople.

It provides likewise for a Court of Appeal from the inferior Tribunals, that is, from the Courts of a similar description established at the seats of government of each sandjak or district.

Besides the High Court of Justice, there is a Commercial Tribunal under the presidency of a permanent salaried officer and two Judges, assisted by four assessors, selected indiscriminately from among the most respectable and honourable merchants. It is also a Court of Appeal from the Commercial Courts below.

The General Provincial Assembly, presided over by the Governor-General, is composed of four elected members, two Mussulman and two non-Mussulman, from each district comprised in the province. It meets once a year, for forty days, at the capital of the province, to take into consideration the maintenance and police of the highways, the construction and repair of public edifices, the demands and wants of the districts and cantons, the means to develop agriculture and commerce, as well as questions relating to the assessment of the taxes. Its deliberations and decisions are recorded in a *procès-verbal*, which is transmitted to Constantinople to receive the Imperial sanction.

Each member has the right to present petitions from the districts and cantons he represents.

Sandjaks or Districts.

With some slight modifications, the administration of the district is assimilated to that of the province in general. The "Mutessarif," or Governor, is named by Imperial Decree. Though subordinate to the Governor-General, he corresponds direct with, and receives his instructions from the Porte, which also appoints the Sub-Inspector of Finance and Sub-Secretary, who are, however, placed under the immediate orders of the Chiefs of their respective Departments at the capital of the province.

The Mutessarif is assisted in the performance of his functions by a Council, composed of the Cadi, or Judge, of the town where he resides, of the Mufti, or chief legal authority, of the Spiritual Chiefs of the non-Mussulman communities, and of four permanent members, two Mussulman and two non-Mussulman. Its duties, within the circle of the district, are similar to those of the Council of Administration at the principal seat of Government, and they are subject to the same limitations.

Every district has also a Civil and Criminal Court, formed by three elected Mussulman and three non-Mussulman members, as well as of a Delegate of the Porte, to assist at its deliberations.

It also serves as a Court of Reference and Appeal to the Cantonal Courts in all matters that exceed their competency. The execution of its judgments, signed by the President and members, appertain to the Governor; but in case they are beyond the powers assigned to him by law, he is bound to submit them to the central authority of the province, and abide by its instructions.

Like the Civil and Criminal Court of the Province, the District Court cannot intervene in matters which come under the Cheriyeh regarding Mussulmans, and under the jurisdiction of the Spiritual Chiefs as regards non-Mussulmans. Neither can it take cognizance of commercial cases, which are adjudged by the district Commercial Tribunal, according to the Commercial Code.

Cazas or Cantons.

The cantons comprised in a district are governed by Kaïmakams, or Sub-Governors, also appointed by the Porte. They are assisted in the administration by three Mussulman and two non-Mussulman coadjutors, who are at the same time members of the Cantonal Council, which is composed of the Cadi and Mufti, of the Spiritual Chiefs of the non-Mussulman communities, of the clerk of the canton, and of three other members.

Its duties are limited to civil and financial matters, such as the police, the collection of the taxes, public works, agriculture, the public revenue, &c. It has no jurisdiction whatever in judicial affairs, which are heard and determined by a Court, presided over by the Cadi, and formed of three elected Mussulman and three non-Mussulman members.

Its written decisions, duly certified, are forwarded to the Sub-Governor, and are submitted by him, if necessary, to the Governor of the district for authority to execute them; but in no case can it intervene in commercial disputes, which are referred for adjudication to the district Commercial Tribunal.

Nahiyeh or Commune.

Twenty or more families residing in the same locality constitute a commune, and several communes a canton. The inhabitants of each commune, whether Mussulmans, Christians, or mixed, select two "Mouktars," or Chiefs, as well as a Communal Council of twelve members, without distinction of creed, the ecclesiastical authorities, however, being members of it *ex officio*.

Its duties are limited to the assessment and collection of the taxes, to the improvement of agriculture, the protection of the forests, the repair of the roads, and the execution of the orders of the cantonal Sub-Governor. It is also authorized to hear and settle disputes amicably; but litigations occurring between individuals belonging to different communes are heard and disposed of by a Court of six or twelve chief men of the communes to which the disputants belong.

Summary of the Elective Law of the Ottoman Empire.

Electors in Communes.—The age of electors is fixed at 18, and the qualification is the payment of 50 piastres (8*s.*) per annum direct taxes. The persons qualified for the posts of Mouktar (head man) and Communal Elders must be 30 years old, and pay 100 piastres (16*s.*) direct taxes. The elections are annual, and members may be re-elected.

Electors in Cantons.—The list of electors paying 150 piastres (1*l.* 4*s.*) is prepared by a Committee every two years, who choose a number of candidates (three times as large as the actual number of members of the Cantonal Council of Administration and Court), the half being non-Mussulman in creed. The list is printed in due form, and is read in the Assembly of Head-men of the communes, who reduce the candidates to twice the number required, and it is then submitted to the Mutessarif, or Governor of the district, who names those receiving the most votes.

Electors in Districts.—This list is also prepared by a Committee, who nominate three times the candidates required for the District Council and Court, and the list is submitted to the Assembly of Representatives of Cantons, who reduce the number of candidates to the quota required according to the votes received, and the Governor-General nominates the actual number.

Electors of Provinces.—This list is confined to persons paying 500 piastres (4*l.*) direct taxes, and who can read and write, and is prepared by a Committee of the chief officers of the district. The list is reduced to double the number required in the District Councils, and the members are finally appointed from this list by the Sublime Porte.

It is important to observe that in all these cases the heads of all the religious communities are *ex officio* members of the several elective Committees.

The organization of the Empire in 1864, according to the system described, was followed, in 1870-71, by the enactment of additional laws and regulations defining and limiting, in a more explicit manner, the duties of the Governors-General and of the several subordinate functionaries. Although these various officers are placed under the surveillance of the chief executive authority of the province, yet, as they hold their appointments direct from the Sovereign, and are enjoined to communicate immediately with the Ministerial Departments at Constantinople to which they severally belong, the principle of personal and individual responsibility exists in full force.

In like manner the power and attributes of the different Councils and Medjlisses are regulated by law, pursuant to which the judicial is completely separated and independent of the executive authority, a radical improvement of the utmost importance, since it deprives the executive officers of their former interference in judicial matters.

With a view to the more efficient execution of the Hatti Houmayoun of 1856, and the consolidation of its provisions, two very important institutions were created in 1870-71 by Imperial Rescript, viz., a Council of State and a Supreme Court of Justice (Divani Ahkiami Adliyeh).

The Council of State, composed of fifty members, is divided into five sections:—

1. Interior and War, which has to examine the projects of laws and regulations submitted to it by the Competent Police, Army, and Marine Departments.

2. Finance and Ecclesiastical Domains (Evcaf), entrusted with the examination of the laws and regulations relating to taxation and the general administration of the revenues of the State and of the Evcaf.

3. Legislation. The legislative section prepares civil, commercial, and criminal laws, as well as the procedure to be observed by the ordinary Tribunals in the application of those laws. It inquires besides into conflicts that might arise between the administrative and judicial authorities.

4. Public Works, Commerce, and Agriculture; and

5. Public Instruction.

The President of the Council of State being a Minister, the Presidents of the five sections, the members, and the Secretary-General, are named by the Sovereign.

Independently of the functions enumerated above, the Supreme Council is called on to give its advice on questions referred to it by the Sultan or the Ministers, as well as to consider the ameliorations and improvements proposed by the general provincial Councils.

It decides by a majority of votes and by secret ballot, if required, whether the Council deliberates in a general assembly or by sections; and the *procès-verbal* of its deliberations and decisions is forwarded to the Grand Vizier.

The Supreme Court of Justice, also presided over by a Minister, is divided into two sections, that of the Court of Cassation (Mehkemei Temyiz) and that of the Court of Appeal (Mehkemei Nizamiyeh).

The first section, consisting of two Chambers, Civil and Criminal, is invested with the ordinary attributes of the Courts of Cassation in continental Europe. It revises the sentences issued by ordinary Tribunals, irrespective of the merits of the case at issue, and with a view to maintain the forms and principles enacted by law.

The High Court of Appeal takes cognizance of all causes referred to it by the Supreme Court of Justice. It examines, in appeal, suits for which there is no special Appellate Court, and pronounces likewise on all exceptionally important cases as a Court of First Instance. An appeal lies also to this Court from a criminal sentence issued by a Tribunal, should it be shown that its action or that of any of its members is of a character to impeach its integrity.

Independently of the Law Courts and Medjlisses established in the district of Constantinople, having the same organization as those in the provinces, there is a Commercial Tribunal, divided into two Chambers, the one for the settlement of disputes arising out of commercial transactions, and the other for disputes connected with maritime affairs. There is besides a Commercial Court of Appeal. These Tribunals are in the Department of the Minister of Commerce, who directs them by his commercial and maritime Chancelleries.

The President and the Vice-Presidents of the two Chambers and the four permanent Judges hold their commissions from the Sovereign; and the eight ordinary members are selected from an electoral list prepared by the Ministerial Chancelleries of all the most notable and honourable merchants without distinction, who have resided five years at the capital, who are thirty years of age, and who have acquired a reputation for integrity, honesty, and ability, and who possess a knowledge of commercial law.

Contemporaneously with the establishment of the Courts and Tribunals referred to throughout the Empire, the Ottoman Government promulgated civil, criminal, commercial, and maritime laws, mostly compiled from the French, Italian, and Dutch Codes.

In addition to these Codes, a series of laws have been enacted regarding the political and administrative organization of the Empire. They clearly define the duties and functions of all the Governmental Departments: of the High Council of State, of the Supreme High Court of Justice, of the Ministry of Police, of the Prefecture and Municipalities, and of the Hygienic and Sanitary Police. They comprise likewise laws with reference to guilds, to taxation, to the Customs, to the army or national force, to industry and public works, to the rights of the individual ("droit de l'homme"), to the rights of immoveable property, to mortgages, &c.

In these enactments are included the laws, published in 1868, for the trial and punishment of public functionaries who are accused of culpable acts in the discharge of their duties, as well as laws for the classification of the corps of Ulemas, Doctors of Law and Divinity, and the mode of their selection, according to their qualification, for the posts of Naibs or Judges of the civil-religious Courts. This reform is not unworthy of record.

Public and Private Education.

As much misconception appears to exist in respect to public and private instruction in the Ottoman dominions, it may not be uninteresting to give some details on this important subject, more especially as it has become compulsory by law both for boys and girls, the latter, however, up to a certain age. The educational establishments are divided into public and private schools. The former are under the direct supervision of the Government, and the latter, although they are established and directed by private individuals, are not altogether exempt from control.

There are five categories of public schools:—1st, the "Sebgian" or primary schools; 2nd, the "Ruchdiyeh," superior primary schools; 3rd, the "Idadiyeh," preparatory schools; 4th, the "Sultaniyeh," lyceums; and, 5th, the "Aliyeh," or special schools.

In every quarter of a town, in every village, or, if necessary, in several quarters and villages united, there must be a primary school, and should the population be mixed, a second for the non-Mussulmans.

Boys and girls are obliged to attend for four years. They are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and the elements of Turkish history, in their respective languages; and their religious education is left to the direction of their spiritual chiefs.

The cost for the construction and maintenance of the communal schools is defrayed by the commune, which is fixed at *l.*

The Ruchdiyeh, or superior primary schools, are established in the smaller towns, comprising upwards of 500 houses.

Each community, of whatever denomination, has the right to possess its own superior primary school, the annual expenses of which, not exceeding 40,000 piastres (320*l.*), are paid out of the funds of the provincial Academic Council. The scholars are instructed in their respective religions, in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian grammar, orthography, arithmetic, book-keeping, plain drawing, elementary geometry, universal history, the history of Turkey, and the language of one of the non-Mussulman communities, which is mostly spoken in the locality, as well as French, which is, however, optional.

The scholars, who obtain a certificate of having passed their examinations, are admitted into the Idadiyeh, or preparatory schools, established in the towns of upwards of 1,000 houses.

These latter schools are mixed; they receive Mussulman and non-Mussulman students who have terminated their studies at Ruchdiyeh, and are taught, during a period of three years, in addition to their previous studies, Turkish literature, epistolary composition, rhetoric, elements of political economy, natural history, algebra, geometry and mensuration, physics, chemistry, and drawing, by six salaried professors and instructors, named by the Minister of Public Instruction, and who possess the diploma of the Superior Normal School at Constantinople.

Like the superior primary schools, the expenses, fixed at a maximum of 80,000 piastres (640*l.*) a-year, are defrayed by the Educational Council of the province.

By way of encouragement certain privileges and prerogatives have been granted to the preparatory schools, and the scholars who have passed their examination in a satisfactory manner are entitled to participate in those advantages.

Pursuant to the system of public instruction, the capital of every province must be provided with a lyceum ("Sultaniyeh,") to receive, as boarders, the students who have passed through the preparatory schools. A specified number of scholarships are established in favour of the students of each community who have evinced much intelligence and aptitude for learning, but whose means do not allow them to incur any expense. They receive also half boarders and day scholars, as well as students from the superior primary schools, who have obtained their certificates of efficiency, except that they are only admitted to the literary and not to the scientific division of the school.

From eight to twelve salaried professors are attached to each lyceum. The instruction includes analytic and descriptive geometry, algebra, and its application to geometry, rectangular and spherical trigonometry, astronomy, and the application of chemistry to arts and agriculture.

These Imperial lyceums are partly maintained by the Government, which is responsible, in case their income is insufficient to meet their annual expenditure, to make up the deficit to the provincial Educational Council, under whose control the lyceums are placed.

Although the superior primary schools for girls have not yet been established throughout the Empire, yet as a trial has been made at Constantinople, it may not be out of place to make a few remarks relative to the law regarding them, which provides that

there shall be a superior primary school for Mussulman, Christian, and other girls, on condition that non-Mussulman communities shall consist of 500 families.

The instruction to be followed, during a period of four years, embraces religion, grammar, orthography, essays on literature and morality, domestic economy, history and geography, arithmetic and book-keeping, drawing and painting in water-colours, needle-work and music, if required.

The foregoing subjects are taught in each school in the language of the community to which the girls belong, and whose religious instruction is confided to their respective spiritual chiefs. But unless they are provided with a certificate from the primary female schools, they are subjected to an examination before admission.

Besides the prejudice alluded to against female education, which is, however, dying away in some localities, one of the difficulties which the Ottoman Government has to encounter is the paucity of competent female teachers.

With a view to overcome this difficulty it has founded a female seminary at the capital for the instruction of fifty young women, without distinction of creed, who have already attended the primary and superior primary schools, otherwise they have to pass an examination before a committee. They are well grounded in the language of their own community, in those branches of instruction which they are required to teach in the primary and superior primary schools to which they are appointed as teachers, by a competitive examination; and for which schools, in the large towns, an annual expenditure of 40,000 piastres (320*l.*) is allowed to be defrayed by the Educational Council of the province.

For the same object, a superior normal school has been also established at Constantinople, to prepare professors for the different categories of public schools. It is needless to enter into all the details regarding the qualifications required of those who desire to follow the career of professors. It will suffice to state that the school is divided into two sections, each of which gives instruction in the various subjects taught at the public educational establishments, to which are added the study of the Ottoman Code, jurisprudence, logic, perspective, mechanics, geology, topography, drawing, and exercises and translations in Turkish and French.

The university established at the capital and subventioned by the Government is divided into three faculties, those of letters, jurisprudence and physics, and natural sciences. The instruction consists in physiology, psychology, logic, rhetoric, the philosophy of history, natural law, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, French, Greek and Latin, metrical composition, universal history, archæology and numismatics, Mahommedan civil and religious jurisprudence, the Roman law, the French Civil Code and procedure, commercial, maritime, and criminal law, international law, political economy, as well as astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, geometry and trigonometry, differential calculus, mechanics and physical and natural science.

The Rector of the University is named by the Sultan, on the proposition of the Minister of Public Instruction. It is furnished with a library, for the use of the professors and students, who matriculate as Bachelors of Art and Doctors of Civil Law.

An Imperial Council of Public Instruction, presided by the Minister of that Department, and consisting of a scientific and administrative section, has the direction of all the public educational establishments in the Empire. It is assisted at its general assemblies by two Councillors of State, by two Councillors of the High Court of Justice, by two Ulemas (Mahommedan doctors of law), and by a spiritual chief of each non-Mussulman community.

The scientific section has a President and eight salaried permanent members, being Ottoman subjects, and an unlimited number of honorary members, to correspond with the universities in Europe. It has for duty to select the best works on arts and sciences for translation, as well as to examine and reward the best authors and translators, for which the State has assigned 1,000,000 piastres (8,000*l.*).

The administrative section is composed of a President, two Vice-Presidents, and four inspectors, two Mussulmans and two non-Mussulmans, of six salaried members, a third being non-Mussulman, and of a Secretary-General. It superintends and directs all the schools, the provincial Educational Councils, the libraries and museums; it names the professors, and prepares the Budget of the Public Instruction, which it submits to the State.

The Educational Councils at the seat of government of each province form branches of the Imperial Council of Public Instruction, and are presided by a Rector, two Vice-Rectors, a Mussulman and a non-Mussulman, who hold their appointments from the Sovereign, a secretary, a cashier, and an auditor of accounts, all of whom are salaried; and from four to ten unpaid Mussulman and non-Mussulman members, selected from the

chief men of the locality, and named by the Minister of Public Instruction, on the recommendation of the Governor-General.

The Educational Councils are intrusted with the execution of the instructions of the Imperial Council of Public Instruction regarding the improvements to be introduced into the schools; with the control of the funds and Government subvention; with the care of the libraries and public press, and, in short, with all matters relating to education, with reference to which they correspond with the Imperial Council at the capital.

Independently of the public schools enumerated above, an Imperial Lyceum ("Mekthèbi Sultani") was established at the capital, in 1868, to prepare 600 boys, belonging to different creeds, for public employments. Every career under the State is open to them, provided they have followed during five years the course of studies pursued in the superior schools, otherwise they are obliged to attend the Lyceum for eight years. A knowledge of Latin is necessary for the students who desire to learn medicine, chemistry, and jurisprudence.

Although the study of the Greek, Armenian, and Bulgarian languages is optional, yet it is obligatory upon the scholars to conform to the rites of their religion, in which they are instructed in accordance with the wishes of their spiritual chiefs or those of their parents.

The Lyceum is organized on the footing of similar establishments in Europe; and it confers the degree of Bachelor, Licentiate, and Doctor of Letters, Science, Jurisprudence, and Medicine to such of the scholars as pass a public examination before a jury. The successful candidates are eligible for posts in the offices of the Government, in the Administrative and Judicial Councils, and can be named to the superior administrative offices as well as to professorships.

However imperfectly the laws and regulations relating to public education may be carried out in some of the more distant provinces of the Empire, yet full credit must be accorded to the Ottoman Government for its laudable efforts to give a liberal education to all its subjects, without distinction of race and religion. It has to struggle with the bigotry of strict but ignorant Mahommedans; with the prejudices of some of the races who are unable to see and appreciate the advantages derived from the acquirement of knowledge; with the opposition of some of the spiritual heads of the Oriental Churches, who apprehend that the enlightenment of their respective flocks might endanger and weaken the control they exercise over them.

Similar difficulties are experienced in other countries, with this difference, however, that their Governments, having mostly to deal with one nationality, can apply with less difficulty the laws on education, whereas in Turkey these difficulties assume greater proportions, in so far as the Government has to meet the wants of a variety of races and religious communities, which are adverse to innovations, which tenaciously adhere to what they conceive to be their ancient rights and immunities, and which, above all, will never voluntarily contribute to the maintenance of the public schools. Under these circumstances it is obliged to proceed with caution and circumspection lest it should be accused of oppression, of an attempt to deprive its non-Mussulman subjects of their right to bring up their children as they like, as well as of their individuality as distinct races.

But no greater proof can be given of the liberal spirit which animates the Ottoman Government in the matter of education than the perfect toleration with which it permits, and indeed authorizes, the establishment of private and free schools, with the simple proviso that the professors and teachers are duly qualified and abstain from teaching politics.

Besides the schools of the orthodox and united Greeks, of the Jacobite and Catholic Armenians, of the Bulgarians, of the Protestants and Maronites, of the Chaldeans or Syrians, and of the Israelites to be found in all the towns and large villages inhabited by these communities, there are numerous educational establishments throughout the Empire conducted by English and American missionaries, by Franciscan friars, Lazarists and Jesuits, by German deaconesses, by sisters of charity, and by other religious orders, who, if they are viewed with a certain degree of jealousy and suspicion by the spiritual heads of the native Christian communities, are respected and protected by the Turkish authorities.

Rights and Immunities of the Spiritual Chiefs of the non-Mussulman Communities.

On the surrender of Jerusalem to the Caliph Omar, he granted a charter to the Patriarch, by which he accorded the free exercise of the Christian religion. It conferred on the ecclesiastics many religious and civil privileges and immunities, such as the

exclusive management of all their spiritual affairs, the direction of their churches and of the ecclesiastical property, jurisdiction in cases of marriage and divorce, the execution of testaments, the administration of the estate of minors, and the punishment, within certain limits, of those of their community who disregarded and disobeyed the rules issued by them from time to time for their guidance.

The only two Churches whose status was recognized from the time of Sultan Mehemed, the Conqueror, were those of the Orthodox Greek and Armenian nations. The Hatti-Houmayoun of 1856, in a spirit of the utmost toleration, notwithstanding the opposition of these two Churches, supported by foreign influence, formally recognized also the status of the Protestant, the United Greek, the United Armenian, the Maronite, and the Bulgarian Churches, with the full enjoyment of all the rights, privileges and immunities originally conceded to the two former communities.

Independently of the direct part which the spiritual heads of the non-Mussulman communities take in the election of the members of the various provincial Tribunals and Councils, and of the presence in them of non-Mussulman members, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been deemed sufficient for the protection of their co-religionists, the patriarchs, metropolitans, and bishops, are enjoined by law, as a further security and protection to the members of their communities against acts of injustice and oppression, to intervene with the local authorities; and in the event their remonstrances are disregarded, to represent the case to Constantinople through their "Kapou Kahyias" or official agents, expressly appointed by the Porte to be the medium of communication between them.

Whatever impediments existed heretofore for the construction of new churches and synagogues, they have been removed, and not only the natives but foreigners are now free to construct and consecrate them—a privilege of which they have largely availed themselves, particularly foreigners, whose chapels, schools, and convents are to be found in most of the populous districts and towns containing a numerous Christian population. To this fact the American missionaries fully testify.

It may be mentioned, as a further evidence of the toleration of the Ottoman Government, that by an Imperial Rescript the objects required for churches, convents, seminaries, hospitals, dispensaries, orphanages, hospices for pilgrims, whether they appertain to native or foreign religious communities, such as sacred vestments, clothing, books, astronomical and other instruments, provisions of all kinds, decorations, medicine, and, in short, every article that may be needed (including even snuff for the use of the priests and sisters of charity), are imported free of duty upon a most liberal scale. It is inexpedient to inquire whether similar privileges and exemptions are accorded elsewhere.

Furthermore, for the better protection of the free exercise of the worship of the non-Mussulman communities and the performance of their religious ceremonies, a law has been enacted for the punishment of those who, by threats or otherwise, interfere with them. And with a view to ensure respect on the part of the Mussulman population, the guards at the military stations are enjoined to turn out and present arms whenever a patriarch or a metropolitan passes before them, in the same manner they would have to do to a Mussulman official of high rank. The same mark of respect is shown to the funeral procession of a Christian who has been in the service of his Government; besides the corpse being accompanied by troops, notwithstanding the presence of the crucifix and other emblems of devotion used by the Oriental Churches on such occasions.

Not only has the Ottoman Government unremittingly employed its best efforts to give satisfaction to its Christian and Israelite subjects, to remove invidious distinctions, to give them their share and place in the general administration of the Empire, to raise them in the estimation of their Mohammedan countrymen, and to secure and extend the rights and immunities which were granted to them from time immemorial, but in order to consolidate these and other benefits, it has directed and authorized the convocation of general Assemblies by the non-Mussulman communities, to devise laws for the conduct of their spiritual and national affairs, which, upon being ratified by the Sovereign, will have the force of laws of the State.

It must not be supposed that, in bringing about the state of things briefly described, the Porte had not to overcome some opposition, not only on the part of the Mussulmans but on that of the religious communities themselves, whose intolerance and jealousy of each other, supported by foreign influences, is a matter of notoriety; and it has been left to a Mohammedan Government to induce them to display more moderation and tolerance towards each other. A fact which redounds to its lasting honour.

For a long period of years, during the turbulent period of the Janissaries, the Greek Patriarchs looked to Russia for protection; and indeed one of the motives which she put forward for declaring war in 1827 against the Porte, was the insult the Janissaries had

offered to the corpse of the Patriarch as the recognized spiritual head of the Orthodox Church of Russia. Very far from the Greek Patriarch and the Œcumenical Council appealing now to that Power for protection, his Eminence has not only denounced the present war by his Encyclical to the Metropolitans and Bishops, as unjust and undertaken in furtherance of views and interests other than those connected with the Christians, as alleged, but he calls upon the faithful of his Church to lend their moral and material support to their legitimate Sovereign the Sultan, for the success of whose arms his Eminence has directed a prayer to be said every Sunday in all the Greek Churches.

Every impartial observer, even the incredulous, must accept this fact as an indisputable evidence of the satisfaction and contentment of the Christians with the order of things established since 1856; but if any further evidence is required, it will be found in the address of the Bishop and Bulgarian notables of Philippopolis to the Porte, who declare that, seeing the daily and ever increasing reforms which the Imperial Government is introducing in the Empire, and its efforts to establish perfect equality among all its subjects, without distinction of class or creed, they are in no need of the pretended ameliorations which Russia desires to impose upon them for views of her own.

It has been affirmed that the principle of perfect equality will remain imperfect so long as Christians are not admitted in the army. In reply, it may be observed, that this grievance cannot be fairly attributed to the Government but to the Christians themselves, who, with all their anxiety that the principle should be fully recognized, are yet equally anxious to enjoy the privilege of exemption from the conscription. And but very recently they remonstrated against being enlisted in the contingent it was proposed to raise at Constantinople, to which remonstrances the Porte had to yield to avoid being accused of oppression.

(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

Tunis, November 27, 1877.

Inclosure 2 in No. 25.

"Fetwa" published by the Sheikh-ul-Islam of the Regency of Tunis.

(Translation.)

NOUS avons reçu de Tunis la Fetwa (décision légale) dont le texte suit, et qui est due à la plume du savant Cheikh Ahmed Ben Khodja. cette Fetwa, remarquable à tous égards, nous semble digne d'être lue et méditée partout où l'on s'intéresse aux affaires actuelles.

Des bruits mensongers qui depuis quelque temps ont cours à Constantinople, et remplissent les journaux, ont eu leur contre-coup dans les pays qui dépendent de l'Empire Ottoman. On a vu, avec une profonde tristesse, se produire et s'étendre des opinions dont le seul effet ne peut être que de nuire à nos intérêts, et de donner satisfaction à nos ennemis. On s'inspire à notre noble et sage Loi Religieuse (Chéria) des principes contraires à ses maximes fondamentales et à ses axiomes les plus reconnus, et j'ai pensé qu'il serait utile d'établir la vérité sur ce point, et de démontrer avec l'aide de Dieu, que le principe fondamental de notre loi, celui qui doit nous faire atteindre la prospérité dans l'autre, c'est l'observation de ce précepte Divin: faire le bien et empêcher le mal.

Dieu dit: "Vous êtes le meilleur des peuples qui aient été envoyés aux autres nations, vous prescrivez le bien, vous interdisez le mal et vous croyez en Dieu," c'est comme si on avait demandé pourquoi sommes-nous le meilleur des peuples? La réponse qui suit celle-ci, explique le premier membre de phrase, parce que vous agissez pour le bien. C'est donc une condition indispensable pour mériter cette qualification, que d'accomplir la condition dont elle dépend. C'est parce que ce précepte a été observé que les peuples Musulmans on fait de si rapides progrès et atteint une puissance aussi formidable. Notre loi, en effet, n'a rien négligé de ce qui pouvait contribuer à épurer les mœurs, rien de ce qui pouvait intéresser le progrès matériel et moral des Musulmans. Notre prophète a dit: "J'ai été envoyé pour achever la loi morale," ainsi lorsque ce peuple choisi convie les autres nations à marcher dans la route tracée par son prophète, à observer les Ordonnances Divines qui nous commandent la concorde, l'union, l'abnégation, et le mépris des passions, elles ne peuvent manquer d'être puissantes et heureuses. La loi fondamentale de la Chéria est la concorde, l'union de toutes les volontés dans la poursuite de la vertu, de la piété, du triomphe de la vérité.

Dieu dit: "Ce qui conduit à la vérité mérite seul d'être suivi." La désunion, la discorde sont un moyen infaillible de nous livrer à l'hostilité de nos ennemis, de donner satisfaction à leurs tendances, d'altérer cette religion, dont le dépôt nous a été confié par

Dieu, de rendre les esprits indifférents et froids pour cet intérêt suprême, et enfin de nous faire mépriser par ceux qui tantôt nous poursuivaient de leur inimitié. Il y a là un sérieux danger pour l'Islamism et une violation de l'un des axiomes de notre loi.

"Ne vous disputez pas; car vous vous diviserez et votre vent tombera." C'est-à-dire, d'après tous les commentateurs, votre puissance, votre autorité, sera diminuée et bientôt détruite par vos discords. Mais le danger est encore plus grave, les intérêts en cause encore plus importants, lorsqu'il s'agit de l'Empire Ottoman, qui est le foyer de la puissance Musulmane. La discorde et la désunion dans l'Empire Ottoman seraient la ruine de l'Islam, la destruction de toute son autorité et de toute sa force; ceux-là donc qui provoquent ces agitations commettent le plus grand des péchés devant Dieu. Lorsque l'accord ne peut pas se produire, il est du devoir des disputants d'examiner si l'inconvénient qui résulterait de leur désunion n'est pas plus grand que l'inconvénient produit par la théorie qu'ils combattent, et dans le cas c'est un devoir impérieux pour eux que d'accepter le mal le moins grave. Dans les circonstances difficiles, au moment des grandes crises, ceux qui se disputent ressemblent à des médecins, réunis autour du lit d'un malade, et qui au lieu de lui donner leurs soins disputeraient sur le nom de l'inventeur du remède qu'il s'agit de lui faire prendre. Les maux que produiraient dans l'état actuel des choses, le manque de concorde parmi les Musulmans, seraient vellement graves, auraient des conséquences si funestes, que l'on doit préférer de beaucoup de renoncer à quelques-uns des avantages que promettrait la résistance; nous devons éviter ce qu'on nous dit, et dans le cas où nous verrions qu'il y a incontestablement avantage à ne pas continuer la discussion, nous avons le devoir de repousser toutes nos préventions et de nous pénétrer des raisons de nos adversaires, car Dieu condamne ceux qui jugent sans savoir. "Ils ont démenti ce dont ils n'avaient aucune connaissance," dit le Coran.

La discussion peut avoir pour objet la recherche du plus grand bien ou celle du moindre mal. Dans le premier cas, il faut adopter sans hésitation ce que l'on croit plus utile: la tradition nous a conservé ces paroles du prophète à Abd-errahman ben Soumra: "Si tu as juré de faire une chose, et qu'il soit mieux de faire autrement, suis ce qui est meilleur, et offre une expiation pour te dégager de ton serment." Si la discussion porte sur la question de savoir quel est le moins grave entre deux inconvénients, il faut embrasser le parti qui offre le moindre mal, il faut savoir renoncer au plus grand bien qu'on se propose en vue du mal qu'il faudrait faire pour l'accomplir.

Notre loi exige en outre que ces discussions soient secrètes, afin que les ennemis ne puissent, en les suivant, épier nos faiblesses et découvrir les motifs de nos résolutions; les traditions du prophète sont formelles sur ce point.

Les difficultés de la situation actuelle, la multiplicité et l'importance des intérêts qui sont en jeu, imposent à l'Imam (chef spirituel des Musulmans) le devoir de s'entourer des conseils les plus éclairés à cause des dangers que courraient l'Islamisme et tous les États Musulmans à défaut de cela; la règle juridique dans ce cas est qu'il faut par tous les moyens combattre et empêcher ce qui est nuisible. Le principe de notre loi est qu'il faut toujours éviter un mal quand on le peut, ainsi que le dit l'Iman Razy et son école; ses adversaires mêmes, comme Charby et d'autres, s'accordent avec lui sur ce point. L'Iman a seul autorité dans les affaires religieuses et civiles, ses attributions sont illimitées et il a seul le pouvoir exécutif, mais Dieu a subordonné l'exercice de cet autorité à l'intérêt général des Musulmans, et tout acte contraire ou nuisible à ces intérêts est essentiellement mal d'après notre loi; de là vient la nécessité d'un contrôle; ces paroles de Dieu "Avez parmi vous un peuple qui prêche le bien et interdise le mal," établissent clairement qu'il doit y avoir parmi les Musulmans un certain nombre de personnes, une classe spéciale à laquelle cette haute mission est confiée. Tous les Musulmans ne sauraient, en effet, s'acquitter dignement de ce devoir. Dieu désigne par le mot "peuple" une classe, une communauté, qui, par ses lumières et ses vertus, puisse guider les autres, surveiller les dirigeants et les diriger, signaler les erreurs et les dangers, provoquer les mesures les plus utiles dans l'intérêt du pays et de la religion, sans autre préoccupation que le bien de tous les Musulmans, dont ils sont comme les représentants. L'interprétation que nous donnons de ces paroles du Koran est celle de tous les commentateurs, le Cheick Elislam Abou Es'saoud dit: "La mission de prescrire le bien et d'interdire le mal ne peut être accomplie que par ceux qui connaissent la loi de Dieu et les conditions dans lesquelles doit se faire l'application de cette loi; des hommes à qui cette connaissance fasse défaut sont toujours exposés à mal interpréter la loi Divine, à être sévères ou indulgents mal à propos, à s'opposer où la résistance ne fait qu'envenimer la situation." L'Iman Ghazaly dit "que l'ignorant gâte plus de choses qu'il n'en arrange."

La mission de prescrire le bien dans le verset que nous discutons, comprend à la fois les intérêts moraux et matériels, les hommes d'état, les politiques honnêtes, expérimentés, exercés par une longue pratique des affaires, forment donc partie de ce peuple dont il est

question dans le Koran. Ainsi cette classe à qui sont confiés les intérêts généraux doit se composer de savants et d'hommes exercés dans l'administration et dans la politique, leurs efforts ont un même but, la prospérité du peuple, l'observation de la loi Divine, le raffermissement de l'autorité de l'Imam sur son peuple. Les Musulmans et les non-Musulmans sont égaux en cela car d'après notre noble loi, ceux qui vivent sous notre protection ont les mêmes droits et les mêmes devoirs que nous. Hommes de science et hommes de politique, ils ont tous un même but, ils doivent donc réunir leurs efforts, établir la concorde, l'harmonie entre eux, car la tradition nous a conservé ces paroles du Prophète: "Les croyants sont comme les pierres d'un édifice qui se soutiennent les unes les autres." Ces paroles nous indiquent notre devoir, comment l'édifice pourrait-il subsister, si les pierres ne se soutiennent pas mutuellement?

C'est un devoir absolu dans notre loi que d'avoir une classe d'hommes pouvant prescrire le bien et empêcher le mal, car notre religion et notre puissance seraient exposées aux plus graves dangers, si l'on venait à négliger ce précepte. En commentant ces paroles du Koran: "Et il connaît leurs affaires à leurs délibérations." Beidhawy dit, qu'il est d'une haute sagesse que de s'entourer des conseils éclairés, et de ne pas se fier à une opinion isolée. La tradition du Prophète dit: "Tous ceux qui ont soumis leurs affaires à la discussion se sont toujours bien trouvés." Or est-il un moment où nous ayons besoin de plus de sagesse et de conseils que celui-ci? Ibn Kaldoun, parlant des changements politiques qui ont eu lieu dans les Etats Musulmans, dit qu'il est dans la nature de l'homme de consulter les autres dans ses nécessités. On sait que le Prophète soumettait à ses compagnons toutes les affaires publiques et privées. Que cet exemple nous suffise! Dieu n'a-t-il pas dit à son Prohète infaillible: "Consulte-les dans tes affaires." Les hommes qui ont la mission de prescrire le bien et d'empêcher le mal ont le droit, ou pour mieux dire, le devoir de surveiller tous les actes de l'Imam qui ne leur sembleni pas conformes à l'intérêt général, et de soumettre au Prince ce qui leur paraît plus utile dans ce but. Si le Prince persiste ses actes sont nuls, parcequ'ils sont contraires à l'intérêt général. Il est superflu de multiplier les citations à l'appui de la théorie que nous venons d'exposer; on connaît ces paroles du Koran, "quand vous différez d'avis soumettez votre affaire à Dieu et au Prophète." La tradition du Prophète dit: "Il ne faut obéir qu'aux ordres justes." On sait aussi que cette obligation de prendre conseil n'abaisse pas la dignité de l'Imam, et lui donne même plus d'autorité et une plus grande influence. Le Prophète a dit: "Ceux auxquels Dieu a confié un peuple et qui ne néglige jamais un bon avis, sentiront sans doute l'odeur du Paradis." Cette tradition est rapportée par Bokhary et par d'autres.

Il faut, d'après notre loi, choisir avec le plus grand soin ceux qui doivent aider le Prince de leurs conseils, la tradition rapportée par Castallany dans le Commentaire sur Bokhary dit: "Quand Dieu veut faire prospérer un prince, il lui donne un sage conseiller, pour lui remettre en mémoire ce qu'il oublie, et l'aider à accomplir ce qu'il entreprend."

Si on a fait attention à ce que nous avons exposé jusqu'ici, on sera convaincu qu'il est de toute nécessité que l'Imam s'entoure de conseillers; ce fait ne saurait être nié sans se mettre en contradiction ouverte avec les textes.

Il faut que l'on sache également que la présence dans nos conseils d'un certain nombre de non-Musulmans vivant sous notre protection, pour défendre leurs intérêts et nous aider de leurs conseils, n'est pas une chose contraire à l'esprit de notre loi. Le Prophète fit assister Aly Sebnd à son conseil le jour de la bataille d'Ohod. Non-Musulmans assisteraient à nos conseils comme représentants de leurs coreligionnaires, comme défenseurs de leurs droits et de leurs intérêts, et notre loi n'oppose aucun empêchement à cela. Ils ont même le droit de défendre les intérêts des Musulmans et de discuter leurs affaires. Le "Wekala Elbendia," citée dans le Itawy (V. I ?), reconnait aux non-Musulmans le droit de représenter civilement des Musulmans, de faire de contrats en leur nom, et d'ester en justice pour eux; cette prescription est répétée dans d'autres livres de jurisprudence Hanéfite.

La protection que nous devons aux non-Musulmans soumis à notre autorité, entraine nécessairement le devoir, pour nous, d'écouter leurs réclamations, et de prêter attention à tout ce qui concerne leurs intérêts. Kornfy dit, p. 119: "La protection (Dhemma) nous impose certains devoirs envers ceux auxquels nous l'avons accordée, car ils sont sous la foi de Dieu, de son Prophète et de l'Islam." Ibn Itazu dit que si les ennemis qui envahissent notre territoire attaquent nos sujets non-Musulmans, nous devons courir à leur secours et mourir en leur défense, afin de garder la foi qui est due à ceux que nous protégeons: "négliger de les défendre," dit cet auteur, "ce serait violer le pacte de Dieu." Kornfy énumère ce que nous devons à ceux qui sont confiés à notre loyauté: "Nous devons traiter avec humanité ceux d'entre eux qui sont faibles, secourir leurs pauvres, nourrir leurs affamés, vêtir ceux qui sont nus—nous devons leur parler avec douceur et affabilité, supporter les inconvénients que peut avoir leur voisinage, non par crainte mais

par générosité, assister de nos conseils à toute occasion, garder et défendre leurs familles, leurs biens, leur honneur, tous leurs droits et tous leurs intérêts, et enfin agir, dans relations avec eux, comme un protecteur généreux envers son protégé." Si nous leur devons protection et assistance, d'après la loi, quel empêchement y a-t-il à ce que nous écoutions leurs réclamations, afin de pouvoir nous acquitter de notre devoir envers eux? Une autre règle de notre jurisprudence est que les non-Musulmans ne doivent prendre la parole que dans les discussions d'affaires, et que dans ces limites leur avis doit être écouté. Cela prouve encore une fois que l'intervention des non-Musulmans dans la discussion de nos affaires est reconnue par notre loi.

Indépendamment de ces considérations, il y a une raison impérieuse d'intérêt général qui nous oblige à leur reconnaître ces droits. En le leur refusant nous exposerions à de graves dangers un grand Empire Musulman, nous donnerions des armes à des ennemis qui ont avancé ces demandes dans un but ultérieur, qui n'est un secret pour personne et qu'ils n'atteindront pas, s'il plaît à Dieu.

No. 26.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 513.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December 3, 1877, 3·30.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs informs me that the Bey of Tunis, owing to the threats of Russia, is hesitating about sending to Constantinople the contingent of troops which he is bound to furnish. If he does not fulfil his duty, Porte will send him a peremptory summons, and take such measures as it may consider necessary. I have advised that this step should not be taken for the present, to avoid complications.

Can your Lordship do anything to prevent difficulties arising between the Porte and the Bey?

No. 27.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 514.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December 4, 1877.*

CONSUL-GENERAL NIXON telegraphs that a serious bread riot occurred at Bagdad on the 1st. Seven vessels loaded were plundered by the populace. Some arrests were made.

No. 28.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 4.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tunis, December 4, 1877.*

THE Russian Consul has this day informed the Regent that, as his Highness has sent a contingent of troops to Turkey, in consequence of which the Regency becomes a province of Turkey, with which Russia is at war, he has been instructed by his Government to cease his functions as Russian Consul, and to place Russian interests under the protection of the German Consulate-General.

No. 29.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 4, 6·15 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, December 4, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to the telegram from Mr. Wyndham, repeated by your Lordship yesterday, the Minister for Foreign Affairs authorizes me to (deny?) in the most formal and positive manner that there has been any interchange of ideas, either official or unofficial, between Italian and Greek Governments relative to a possible occupation of North Albania by Italy, and that the Italian Government entertained no such project.

No. 30.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 123. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, November 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish military and civil authorities here are under the greatest discouragement, owing to the success of the Montenegrin operations. The small force echeloned on the road leading from Antivari has had to retreat here, and a great panic now prevails in Scutari.

The authorities assert that troops are on their way from Candia, but they evidently hope for instructions to enter into negotiations with the Montenegrins.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 31.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 124. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, November 22, 1877.*

DURING the past few days, owing to the panic that has been caused by the successful operations of the Montenegrins, I have frequently been brought in contact with the Commander-in-chief and the Governor-General, and I have lost no opportunity of impressing upon their Excellencies the necessity of keeping the Porte fully aware of the true state of affairs, as well as of expressing my belief that my colleagues shared my willingness to assist to the best of our power to bring to an end or alleviate the miseries which the progress of war had suddenly brought upon a most populous and fertile portion of the Ottoman Empire.

Early yesterday morning I was awakened by a summons from Ali Saib Pasha, the Commander-in-chief; and, on proceeding to head-quarters, his Excellency said that he had been thinking over some of our recent conversations, and that he now wished to know if he could telegraph to the Porte that I was prepared to endeavour to visit the Prince of Montenegro and see whether there was any possibility of affecting an opening for the commencement of negotiations.

I replied that the end in view was so desirable that I felt I could not do wrong in assisting its furtherance, but that, if possible, I should like to associate with myself my colleagues in making the communication to the Prince of Montenegro.

Ali Saib Pasha then telegraphed to the Grand Vizier, and last night he again sent for me and told me that he had received the authority of the Porte to ask me privately to proceed to Montenegro, and ascertain from Prince Nicholas what His Highness proposes to gain by his military operations, in order that the Porte may see whether the object His Highness has in view cannot be accorded without further recourse to arms.

The Mouchir, however, begged me for the moment to represent the step to be taken as one emanating from me, and it was only on this condition that he would permit me to ask my colleagues to join me.

The following account of the manner in which I placed the matter before the Austrian Consul-General equally explains my conversation with my French, Italian, and Greek Colleagues.

I told M. Wassich that I had ascertained from Ali Saib Pasha that he would authorize the passage through his lines for the purpose of reaching the Montenegrin head-quarters of any of the Consuls who might wish to let the Prince know that his Excellency would at once transmit to the Porte, for its consideration, the final object of the hostilities now being carried on by Montenegro.

M. Wassich declined to take any action in the matter in the absence of instructions from Vienna, and as he is of opinion that Montenegro is not a free agent. My inability to assure him that the step to be taken would be made at the direct instance of the Turkish Commander-in-chief was another reason for his absention. M. Wassich would be prepared, if ever Scutari was threatened by a Montenegrin bombardment, to use his good offices to avert it.

My other colleagues answered me much in the same sense, M. Berio, the Italian Consul, adding, however, that if the Turkish authorities would permit the transmission of a cyphered telegram to Rome he would perhaps be authorized to join me.

When I returned to Ali Saib Pasha and recounted the above, I suggested to his Excellency that I should confine myself to writing a letter to Prince Nicholas, but the Pasha preferred that I should, if possible, see the Prince, as then he would have no objection to my explaining verbally to His Highness that I had been authorized by his Excellency to ascertain the conditions proposed by Montenegro for bringing about peace.

Ali Saib Pasha said the exact state of the matter was this :—

A disposition for a peaceable arrangement at the Porte might burst into bloom and develop into ultimate fruit if a useless crop of irritating formalities was not allowed to choke it.

Under these circumstances I hope your Lordship will not greatly disapprove the course I have consented to adopt.

I have telegraphed to M. Duby, simply asking permission to visit Prince Nicholas wherever His Highness may have his head-quarters, and I have reported this to Mr. Layard, adding that it is for the purpose of making a communication to His Highness.

Ali Saib Pasha declined to allow me to use the cypher for my telegram to the Ambassador, and it was only after I had said that I felt I could not well comply with his request to proceed to Montenegro that he permitted my cyphered telegram of this afternoon to be transmitted to your Lordship.

Should an order reach me from your Lordship not to carry out my proposed visit, I can very easily explain to M. Duby, without entering into particulars, the change in my intentions.

There is very little doubt that my colleagues are right in believing that the Prince of Montenegro is in a position which obliges him to follow the orders of the Russian Government, and when I see His Highness I shall explain to him that, in making to him my communication, I have no intention that it should be considered in any other light than as a piece of information that might, with equal propriety, have been made to any of the commanders of the armies of his ally, the Emperor of Russia, and that Ali Saib Pasha might have chosen any other friend to convey it to His Highness.

The probability is that Prince Nicholas will simply thank me for the message conveyed to him, and decline to set out his pretensions; but, perhaps, your Lordship will not think my action entirely barren if it in any way adds to the conviction of Ali Saib Pasha's superiors that there are no roundabout ways for Turkey to come to an understanding with her enemies, and that only the direct channels are open to her.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 32.

Extract of a Private Letter from Mr. H. Cooper, Vice-Consul in Bosnia, to Mr. Currie.—(Received December 5.)

Gor Tugla, Bosnia, November 12, 1877.—I LEFT Bosna Serai on Friday the 9th, armed with the Vali Pasha's recommendations, and having been announced to the various local authorities to prevent any more difficulties similar to that at Bihac. The road across the mountains from Bosna Serai to Dol Tugla is the worst I ever travelled, and owing to delay in getting away on Friday morning, the last two hours' journey that day had to be made in the dark. The snow, rocks, and mud had delayed the pony carrying my kit; the guide had vanished with it. I had pushed on with the servants, one of whom pretended he knew the way. However, the night was too much for him, and how we ever reached Olovo I could scarcely say, but the descent seemed a succession of falls, and a broken and rapid stream alone brought us to a stand-still. Luckily we saw a light, and making for it, a man was induced to leave his house and conduct us to Olovo. The pony with luggage had prudently remained for the night where it was when dark came on. But though the road was bad beyond description, the frozen snow was the only good-going between Bosna Serai and Olovo. The scenery was good, and the next day's ride through the northern slopes of the mountains, afforded views which I would give a great deal to be able to put on canvass. The lights and shades on the distant hills of the Possavina, seen through glades in oak forests, and with gorgeously robed Moslems conducting strings of pack animals through woodland paths for a foreground, would form a subject which few artists could do justice to.

The country slopes away from the central mountains towards the Sav and the Drina in a succession of low hills and broad valleys, ending at the low lands near the junction of the two rivers. The valleys are rich and well cultivated; the slopes of the higher hills

are covered with fine forest timber, oak and beech, and there is abundance of fire-wood on the lower hills. Salt springs at Dol and Gor Tugla afford work for a good many hands, the water being boiled in large pans, and the residue forming a course soft salt.

The Moslems and Christians are pretty equally balanced as far as numbers go in this Sandjak, and seem to live together very amicably. Dol Tugla, the residence of the Mutesarif of Zvornik, is by far the most prosperous town I have seen in Bosnia. It is not so large as Travnik or Banjaluka, but the newer houses are built of brick in the European style. The inhabitants are, and give one the impression of being, very well to do. Good carriage-roads run to Magla, Britchka on the Danube, and to Zvornik. There is a brick Latin church, and the Greeks are building also a good-sized brick place of worship. But their hideous edifices spoil any place, and I can sympathise with the Moslems, who dislike to see their mosques eclipsed by Greek churches. The mosques themselves are rarely buildings of much pretension, but the minarets are always graceful objects; and, in a country where every house is built more or less like a Noah's ark, the relief afforded by one or two white minarets is very grateful to the eye. There is also a flour mill worked by Christians in Tugla, and rich fields. Like every other place it is of course suffering from the war.

Bjelina, 14th.—I have just come in from inspecting the entrenched camp. Under the direction of an energetic officer, Serusi Bey, Kaimakam (Major), the Turks have raised works capable of holding 6,000 men. Bjelina stands on a plain, not far from the Drina; was attacked last year by the Servians, who were beaten off. It was then undefended by any works, but the Turks have been correcting their faults steadily since, and now the peninsula between the Sav and the Drina is pretty well guarded against a Servian attack, provided the Turks can find sufficient men to man their works. The general idea is three lines:—1. Redoubts and shelter-trenches along the Drina; of these small works there are twenty-five between Raca and Shipka, opposite Loznica. 2. Detached redoubts, capable of holding artillery, half-a-mile in advance of camp. 3. Entrenched camp for 6,000 men, inclosed by ditch and parapet, with two or three places for artillery. Except on one side there is no attempt at flanking defences. The country is flat, but owing to long grass and weeds, at the present time it is impossible to see far. But the Turks have a capital plan in use in all works I have seen, of having raised cages for sentries, so that even in a flat country their sentries can keep a pretty wide look-out. The troops in the works along the Drina (2,000), are in huts outside the works. Those in the camp (1500), are in pits, tents, and huts. The cleanliness of all is very striking after visits to other Turkish works. There are about 510 Bashi-Bazouks along the Drina, their horses being sheltered in temporary stables. A battery (6 guns) 2-pounder Krupp's, well horsed, and 2 muzzle-loading, are in the entrenched camp. The remaining troops are 1 battalion Nizam, ½ battalion Redif and Mustafiz. I saw 6 corps of the latter, each 100 strong, at drill. They were doing the manual exercise capitally. The commander says in two days they could be reinforced by 2,000 men who had not yet been under arms. Out of the 3,500 men there are only 120 in hospital. Fevers and dysentery are the chief diseases, and within the last few days there have been some cases of typhoid fever. There is no doctor nearer than Tugla and Zvornik; the hospital here being in charge of an Italian pharmacien, M. Luigi, who was chief pharmacien to Dr. Smadwith during the siege of Kars, 1854-55.

Bjelina suffered a good deal last year, partly owing to the flight of many of the Christian shop-keepers, and partly to the Servian attack, when a suburb was burnt, but rebuilding is actively going on. The Kaimakam tells me the refugees who fled to Servia are fast returning every day, and have been for the last five months. He gives a piteous account of their flight, and says the Servians refused to let them bring back any of their live stock, and contrasts the action of the Turkish Government, which is helping them to rebuild their houses. But of this I cannot vouch, but both Kaimakams, civil and military, are young men, and seem treated with much greater respect than I have noticed in other towns. The curse of this place is drink. Yesterday, on entering the town, I met numbers of peasants going out, and all bore signs of drink, whilst some were helpless. So great is the evil, that the commander has given strict orders that no liquors shall be sold to the soldiers. This seems strange in a Mohametan army, but, on inquiry, I find all officers drink regularly, and that a man is considered sober or not according to the quantity he takes, whilst he can stand.

Srebrenica, 18th.—I did not write from Zvornik, as up to the last I hoped to have been able to make a detailed report of that fortress; but, owing to the strange behaviour of the commanding officer, I was unable to visit the interior of the works. Zvornik itself stands in a crowded position on the left bank of the Drina, which here runs through a narrow valley, above the town almost a rocky gorge. The old castle stands on the high

ground behind the town, with walls stretching down to an old work on the river bank. The country opposite Mali Zvornik, the only Turkish ground on right bank of Drina on the Servian frontier, is a broken hilly district, the top of every small hill being crowned with a work of some kind or other. On my arrival on Thursday night the commandant, Mustah Bey, called, and it was arranged I should see the castle on Friday; but, on going to his house on Friday, Mustah objected to going to the castle as it was the Mohametan Sunday, and market-day in town, besides I could see the castle the following morning *en route* to Srebrenica. Of course, I agreed, but on visiting the castle next morning was rather summarily requested to leave. I had ridden in with a zaptieh and groom, and not seen till we were in the court-yard. The morning was misty, and it was only just after daybreak. My acquaintance, Mustah Bey, was not there, and the sergeant in charge had strict orders to prevent anyone entering. The zaptieh was run out ignominiously, and they wanted to do the same to the groom and me, but I flourished the Pasha's permit, and my groom shouted I was an English Vice-Consul. We retired gracefully. I returned to Zvornick to give my commander a bit of my mind, but he was in his harem. I could not wait, as I had a long day's journey before me. I have not got the exact number of guns, but I think I saw sufficient, combined with information received from others, to enable me to draw up a tolerably accurate report. But the Turkish sentries had better keep a sharper look-out if they intend to prevent an enemy entering their works.

All along the Drina troops are drawn up in small parties. The men are sheltered in huts made by themselves, and nearly every post is close to a breast-work. The construction of these is admirable. The troops in Zvornik district looked very wretched and uncared-for, and there is a great deal of sickness among them. Here, which is the head quarters of the Srebrenica district, there is not much sickness.

The Turks have some 10,000 men along the Drina frontier of Servia. 1st command, Bjelina; 2nd, Zvornik; 3rd, Srebrenica. Field artillery at Bjelina; garrison artillery at Zvornik and Srebrenica. The guns here would, in the event of hostilities, be moved to batteries prepared on height overlooking Ljutovia. The castle here is an old building, utterly useless as a defensive position, only occupied as a barrack and store.

The plain of the Save ends near Loznica, and from there the Drina runs through broken country; above Zvornik it is a rocky gorge. The country is partly cleared, but the inhabitants on Turkish side live back away from the Drina. The Servian bank better cultivated, and several hamlets; whilst numerous herds offer tempting baits for the Turkish troops scattered along the opposite bank. This place is a mere mountain village; years ago there were silver mines, but they have not been worked for centuries. The country looks essentially mineral; the hills are abrupt and rugged, vegetation stunted, and water discoloured. The inhabitants are a sickly set, and suffer terribly from goitre. I am staying in the house of a Bey. The civil and military authorities, except the Zvornik commandant, have been excessively civil throughout my visit to the Sandjak of Zvornik, and the weather has been capital. To-morrow I start for Bosna-Serai, which I hope to reach in three days.

I am very pleased with what I have seen of the soldiers, but their diet is insufficient, and where neglected by their officers they are in a bad state. Turkey can very well repel any attack Servia is likely to make on Bosnia, but I doubt if she could send any force across the Drina, except irregulars, who would be most galling neighbours to the Servian farmers. In the event of war, it is the expressed intention of Turkey to harry Servia.

No. 33.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 5.)

(No. 515.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December* 4, 6·30 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER and Consul Blunt inform me that yesterday Russians attacked Mehemet Ali Pasha's positions at Kamarli, and after severe fighting during the whole day were repulsed with heavy losses.

Weather stated to be bad.

No. 34.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 5.)

(No. 516.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December* 4, 10 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER informs me that Suleiman Pasha has captured Elena and 6 guns, and is advancing upon Tirnova.

No. 35.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, December* 4, 1877.

STATEMENT reported in Mr. Abbott's despatch to me of 12th November, as to the late Persian camp at Khoi having been maintained out of deference to wishes of Russian Government, is most solemnly denied by Persian Government.

No. 36.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 5.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *Vienna, December* 4, 1877.

I ASKED Count Andrassy to-day afternoon what objects he referred to when he said to me on Saturday that Austria might require services of her ships of war in the Adriatic, and as he evaded a direct reply by saying that their numbers were limited, I then inquired if he intended to protect Albania from Garibaldians, and to this he answered, "Certainly, if they attempt to come there." After this conversation, which was strictly private, I received Mr. Wyndham's telegram, sent to me yesterday, and though what M. Tricoupi anticipates would be carrying (out?) Prince Bismarck's programme, I have seen no signs here as yet of a change having taken place in the policy of Austria, and if M. Tricoupi has no better source for his information than the Greek Minister here it is little to be relied on, as my Greek colleague is known to be a speculative politician, who draws conclusions from doubtful premisses, and habitually foresees political combinations which never take place.

No. 36A.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 5.)

(No. 517.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December* 5, 1877, 10·30 A.M.

A COMMUNICATION just received by me from Grand Vizier gives the losses of the Russians, at the battle of Elena and capture of the place, as 3,000 dead, 300 prisoners (amongst them several superior officers), 11 guns, and 21 caissons. It is also said that Mehemet Ali Pasha again repulsed attack of Russians yesterday.

No. 36B.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 5.)

(No. 518.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December* 5, 1877, 11·30 A.M.

I HAVE received the following telegram from Sir A. Kemball, dated December 3:—

"Nothing to report from Erzeroum, except slight skirmish with Russian cavalry patrol. Weather in favour of Turks. Result depends on their staunchness if attacked."

No. 36c.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 519.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December 5, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

CAPTAIN FIFE telegraphs from Tashkessan that Mehemet Ali, who holds a strong position at south end of Orkhanié Pass, telegraphed that yesterday sharp fighting took place on Turkish left, without decisive result, each side losing perhaps 500 men. Turks hold Strelitza and Sofia.

Vice-Consul Calvert confirms this news, adding that the Russians appear to have attempted to turn Orkhanié position by Etropol; but, in endeavouring to take Turkish positions near village of Koumali, were repulsed with heavy loss by Chakir Pasha.

Russians engaged were troops of the Guard. Fresh attack is anticipated.

No. 37.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 795. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 5, 1877.*

THE Turkish Ambassador spoke to me on the 26th ultimo on the subject of the attitude of the Greek Government.

M. Tricoupi, he said, who had at first taken offence at the second communication made to him by Her Majesty's Government at the request of the Porte, had subsequently expressed himself satisfied with the explanations given to him by Photiades Bey, and had professed the most friendly disposition towards the Government of Turkey. The Porte, however, anxious as it was to live in perfect harmony with Greece, regretted to find that the assurances of the Hellenic Government were unfortunately not borne out by their acts. Yet the Cabinet of Athens complained of the troops, few as they were in number, which the Turkish Government had collected near the frontier. It was notorious, Musurus Pasha said, that Greece had been the first to make military preparations, and that it was not until long afterwards that the Porte had felt bound, as a measure of precaution, to provide for the defence of its frontier provinces. Turkey had nothing to gain by invading Greek territory, but it was the duty of the Porte to take all the measures in its power to prevent an invasion of Turkish territory by the Greeks, without going beyond the limits of moderation and international law.

The Russians have now been for nearly three years, said his Excellency, making war upon us directly or indirectly. We have had to call into the field more than 700,000 men, and when, after having struggled against so many difficulties, we are menaced by another neighbouring Power, which, with the object of profiting by the situation, collects its forces on our frontier and seeks to disturb the tranquillity of our provinces, are we not authorized and justified in taking all the measures of defence which circumstances impose upon us?

His Excellency, in conclusion, contrasted the conduct of the two Governments. The Porte had first made direct representations to the Greek Government, which were met with evasive answers. They had then had recourse to the good offices of England, and Her Majesty's Government had, by agreeing to communicate the complaints of the Porte to the Greek Government, shown that they considered them well founded. The steps taken by Her Majesty's Government were neither in their substance nor in their form such as to offend the Government of Greece, yet they had replied with asperity Impartial observers might draw their own conclusions from these facts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 38.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 797. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 5, 1877.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 1353, Confidential, of the 17th ultimo, reporting the seizure by the Prize Court of three Greek ships, which had left Nicolaieff with cargoes of grain, on their arrival in the Bosphorus, and informing me of

the action taken by your Excellency; and I have to state to you that your proceedings in this matter are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 39.

Lord Tenterden to the Law Officers of the Crown and Dr. Deane.

Gentlemen, *Foreign Office, December 5, 1877.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Derby to transmit to you the accompanying telegram, received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, referring to the seizure in the Bosphorus, for alleged breach of the blockade, of two Greek vessels, chartered by Italians, and the release of which it was reported that the Italian Government had demanded for the reasons stated in the telegram.

The accompanying letter from M. Petrocochino contains further particulars respecting this case.

I am further to transmit to you the draft of a memorandum which Lord Derby proposes to communicate, unofficially, to the Italian Ambassador at this Court, as his Lordship thinks it may be desirable that the Italian Government should be informed of the views of Her Majesty's Government on the case. Before, however, communicating this memorandum to General Menabrea, Lord Derby would be glad to be informed whether you concur in the statements as to the law of blockade therein contained, and to be favoured with any observations you may desire to offer on the subject of the proposed communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 40.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 71. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, November 24, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 69 of the 19th instant, I have the honour further to report to your Lordship that 2 battalions of Nizam left Suda Bay on the 21st instant for Constantinople, and 3 battalions of Redif for Antivari. The Nizam battalions numbered about 780 men each, and belonged to the Imperial Guard or 1st army corps; the Redif battalions numbered 600 each, making in all a total of 3,360 men. The former were recruited in Anatolia, the latter in Syria. Another and sole remaining battalion of Nizam is under orders to follow the others.

The garrison now stationed in Crete, including the one battalion of Nizam not yet left, is composed of battalions thus composed:—

	Men.
1 Nizam battalion	780
5 Redif battalions	3,500
3 Mustahfiz battalions	3,300
Total	7,580

The Moslem youth of Canea, and, I believe, of Rethymo and Candia also, have offered their services as National Guards, and are soliciting the Government for arms. The Governor-General has not yet decided whether to accept their services or not.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S. *November 26.*—Two corvettes, the "Libnân" and "Beyrout," escorted the troops to Antivari, and yesterday morning, in consequence of a telegram from the Porte, the ironclad frigate "Orkhanié," with Vice-Admiral Hussein Pasha on board, and the despatch vessel "Khanin," also set out for the same destination, and were to be joined at sea by the "Azizié."

T. B. S.

No. 41.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 72. Political.)
Canea, Crete, November 26, 1877.

My Lord,

THE leading Christian Chiefs are bestirring themselves to restrain the anarchy which prevails everywhere by endeavouring to form a police of their own, after the example of the inhabitants of Milopotamos. A reconciliation between the border clans of Lakos and Epano Chorio in Selino has just been cemented by the bond of brotherhood known by the name of *αδελφοποιΐα*, and some notorious sheep-stealers have been expelled their territories.

There is a great scarcity of money in the the various local treasuries, and little is forthcoming from the tithe of the olive crop, because it is an unusually scanty one. The local Governors are becoming discontented, and as the police are also unpaid, they acquiesce in the disorder which reigns around them.

The Judges in some of the districts neglect to attend the Courts on the ground of their salaries being unpaid, the Christian Judges of the Court of First Instance in Canea being among the number. The latter on being reproached for their conduct stated that they would continue to discharge their duties if the money at the disposal of the Government were divided equally among the several departments, but that while the Pasha and a few influential employés received their salaries in cash, the mass of the rest were paid only in paper money, and themselves nothing at all.

I am informed that the Committee in Crete has been invited by some wealthy Athenians connected with the Committee in Greece to cross over to Athens until some decision has been arrived at, with the promise that all their personal wants shall be liberally supplied. The Committee have refused the invitation, not wishing that their future action should be trammelled by the hospitality given them by Greece. They naturally foresee that once on Greek soil they have no choice but to become partizans of the annexation of their country to Greece, a policy they are not yet prepared to advocate, though it seems to be gaining more adherents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 42.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 520. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, December 6, 1877.

SULTAN, whom I have seen to-day, says that he is satisfied with military operations, and is confident that the Russians will be unable to carry war to the south of Balkans this year.

His Majesty hopes to receive news from Plevna within three or four days.

Reinforcements are being sent to Suleiman and Mehemet Ali Pashas.

German Ambassador is urging the Porte to lose no time in coming to a separate and direct understanding with Russia.

No. 43.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 521.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, December 6, 1877.

GRAND VIZIER resigned three days ago, in consequence of interference of Palace in public affairs. He has now withdrawn his resignation, which would have been a serious embarrassment in the present critical state of affairs. I saw him to-day with the Sultan.

No. 44.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(Telegraphic.)
Tunis, December 6, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 4th December, I have the honour to state that the contingent of troops, notwithstanding the threats from Russia or other quarters, will be ready to be sent to Constantinople in about eighty (eight ?) days.

No. 45.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 817.)
Foreign Office, December 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 1339 of the 14th ultimo, forwarding a copy of a despatch addressed by you to General Sir A. Kemball, expressing your sense of the valuable services rendered by him as Military Attaché with the Turkish army in Armenia. I have great pleasure in acquainting your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government entirely concur in the terms of your despatch, and in requesting you to convey to Sir A. Kemball, the high approval of Her Majesty's Government for the manner in which he has discharged the arduous and important duties entrusted to him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 46.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 7.)

(Confidentielle.)
(Télégraphique.)
Constantinople, le 3 Décembre, 1877.

L'OPINION publique chez nous a été péniblement affectée du discours de Lord Derby. Nous nous demandons si par malheur les sentiments de bienveillance de sa Seigneurie, et la politique traditionnelle du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, ont subitement changé à notre égard. D'un autre côté, en présence de la différence du langage tenu publiquement par les deux susdits Ministres de Sa Majesté Britannique, nous nous demandons également si chacun d'eux a des vues opposées. Je serai heureux de pouvoir dissiper cette impression de l'esprit de la Sublime Porte, et à cet effet vous voudrez bien faire une démarche auprès de Lord Derby.

Je profite de cette occasion pour vous informer que, d'après les renseignements qui nous proviennent, on croirait en Angleterre que, malgré les tentatives du Gouvernement Britannique, la Sublime Porte ne veut accepter aucune médiation. C'est le contraire. Désireux de mettre un terme à l'effusion du sang, nous avons fait, il y a déjà quelque temps, une démarche confidentielle auprès du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique pour obtenir sa médiation ; mais il nous a été répondu, que l'Angleterre ne pouvait pas faire elle-même le premier pas, et que, si une autre Puissance prenait l'initiative d'une telle médiation, elle l'appuyerait.

Votre Excellence peut donner ces explications à Lord Derby.

No. 47.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)
Poradim, December 6, 1877.

FOR two days Turks in force have been attacking the Russian position east of Elena.

Russians withdrawn to west of that place; followed by enemy.

Probable, but apparently hopeless, object of Turks to push through Tirnova to Osman Pasha.

Russians have been reinforced, and Turks have discontinued the attack.

Former will attempt to retake position.
Russian losses are great.
Russians have taken Baba-Konak, on the Sophia road.
Forces of Gourko, about 40,000 infantry, 12 regiments of cavalry, and 15 batteries.
There are signs of Osman Pasha soon attempting to leave his fortress.
Weather misty.

No. 48.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(Telegraphic.) *Poradim, December 6, 1877.*

GENERAL IGNATIEW was arrived here to-day.

No. 49.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, December 6, 1877.*

THE force which has passed into the Dobrudscha from this side could not be more than 50,000, composed of the 14th corps d'armée entire and a part of the 7th and 10th corps.

A few troops returned, and there has been much sickness. Present force estimated under 40,000.

No. 50.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(No. 522.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December 7, 1877.*

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from Captain Trotter from Schud-Tepesi, dated yesterday:—

"Enemy has been reinforced by the Grand Duke Michael with 16 battalions and 60 guns. Reinforcements wanted."

No. 51.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1391.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 24, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of an interesting report from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert with reference to the present state of affairs at Philippopolis, and the treatment of Bulgarian prisoners suspected of having taken part with the Russians. It gives me very great satisfaction to find that the dismissal of Ibrahim Pasha, obtained through my representations to the Sultan, has led to good results, and that the instance mentioned by Mr. Calvert of His Majesty's kindness to some Bulgarians brought as prisoners to Constantinople, of which I had not previously heard, affords fresh proof of the generous and humane sentiments with which, I have ventured to assure your Lordship, I believe His Majesty to be animated towards all his subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Philippopoli, November 1, 1877.*

I HAVE much pleasure in reporting to your Excellency that, since the departure of Ibrahim Pasha on the 20th ultimo, a marked improvement has taken place in the aspect

of affairs in this district. The telegram recalling him reached Ibrahim Pasha at Carlowa, where he had been for some days previously in command of the troops in that district, and whence, I now see by the English papers, he has sent to the Porte accounts of engagements with insurgents which I can only describe as fictitious, all traces of insurrection on this side of the Balkans having disappeared more than two months ago. His recall has occasioned universal satisfaction, his arrogant manners having made him an object of dislike to the Turks, while he was the terror of the Christians.

The post of President of the court-martial is now filled by Colonel Shukri Bey, who is reported to be a just man, and inclined to be lenient. He has already had some 150 Bulgarians released from prison during the ten days he has been at the head of the tribunal. I understand, however, that some forty others are either under sentence of death or about to be condemned, but the trials have lost that exceedingly summary character which obtained under Ibrahim Pasha.

From Carlowa, where Ibrahim Pasha has been succeeded in command of the troops by Rifaat Pasha, I learn that the latter officer is behaving towards the Bulgarian inhabitants in a most creditable way. I hear that he has put entirely a stop to the ill-treatment suffered by the Bulgarians there on the return of the exasperated Mussulman inhabitants; that he visits the Bulgarians in their houses to judge for himself of their condition and wants; that he has caused the shops to be reopened, free circulation in the streets restored, and, in short, that he has put an end to the reign of terror which the Bulgarians of Carlowa brought upon themselves by their complicity with the Russians, and the outrages in which many of them indulged on the arrival of the invaders.

The object of the Turkish camp at Carlowa is, I understand, to watch the southern entrance of the Trojan Pass, at the northern extremity of which the Russians and insurgents are reported to be in some force.

The Geshoffs continue to be under close arrest, although allowed to read the papers, and occasionally to receive friends. They have not yet been even once examined, though Ibrahim Pasha told me that the "mazbatas" for their removal had been sent to Constantinople for ratification. None of their books or papers have been sequestered or examined; and although it was at one time alleged, with some plausibility, that their arrest was in consequence of statements inculpating them made by a Bulgarian of Carlowa, with whom they were known to have been at one time in intercourse, I have reason to believe that their close relationship to Balabanoff, one of the two Bulgarian agents who visited England last year, and the fact that they never chose to disavow his proceedings against the Turkish Government, are the main reasons for their imprisonment. As regards the fact that the elder of them last year corresponded with the "Times," the Turkish authorities had, I believe, no knowledge of the circumstance until it was made public the other day in a letter from the "Times'" special correspondent here.

A striking example of the Sultan's kindliness of disposition, which comes opportunely in disproof of the sentiments attributed to him by Ibrahim Pasha, has come to light in the story of their adventures, related to me by six Bulgarian merchants of Tatar-Bazardjik, who were some time since arrested and sent to Constantinople, but have just been sent back to their homes. His Majesty, they relate, hearing somehow of their arrival in Stamboul, caused them to be brought before him at the Palace. They were then, and had been since their arrest, handcuffed; but the Sultan, on learning from their answers to his inquiries that they were not insurgents, had never borne arms, or joined the Russians, but had been seized during the night in their houses, ordered their handcuffs to be taken off, and, after addressing them with a few kind words, had them led into another apartment, where they were treated to a copious dinner. On leaving the palace, whence they were taken back to the police-station under escort, they were each presented with 250 piastres, and a few days afterwards were brought back to Philippopoli, where they were finally set at liberty.

The principal Bulgarian merchants of Hasskeui and Tchirpan, to the number of about forty, who are probably fully as innocent as these Bulgarians of Tatar-Bazardjik, have just been brought here under arrest. Like the Bazardjik merchants they have never borne arms or had any dealings with the Russians, though I could not, of course, undertake to say that none of them entertain pro-Russian feelings; they have regularly paid all the extraordinary contributions which they were called upon to furnish towards the war expenses, and though I am not acquainted with any of them personally, I think it may safely be said that they, being engaged in commerce, were not the kind of persons likely to countenance insurrectionary schemes. Yet they have been torn from their homes and families without a moment's warning, and I hear that it is contemplated to send them all into confinement in Asia Minor.

Most of the arrests made in the minor towns of this district are, I understand,

ordered on the strength of information lodged by secret committees formed of Turkish tradesmen ("esnafs"), and containing, it is to be feared, many unprincipled persons, who would not scruple to wrongly incriminate any Bulgarian personally obnoxious to them.

I am happy to say that, besides the Geshoffs, none of the more prominent Bulgarians of Philippopoli have been arrested. Those who were imprisoned previously to the Geshoffs belong to the small shopkeeper class. None of them have yet been released or even tried.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 52.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 8.)

(No. 1392. Confidential.)
Constantinople, November 24, 1877.

My Lord,

IT appears to me to be of considerable importance to ascertain what may be the condition at the present time of Thessaly and Epirus, what is really taking place on the Greek frontiers, whether bands of armed men have, as alleged by the Porte, passed, or are preparing to pass, from Greece into Turkish territory, for the purpose of raising the Christian populations, and how far the statements made by the Hellenic Government, or coming from Greek sources, as to the cruelties and outrages committed by the Turkish irregular troops upon the Christians of those provinces, are well founded. I therefore ventured to request your Lordship's permission to send Mr. Longworth, on whose judgment and discretion I have reason to believe I can rely, to visit Thessaly and Epirus, and to report to me fully upon their present state. Your Lordship having authorized me to employ Mr. Longworth as I propose, he has left Constantinople to-day for Salonica. He will have strong recommendations from the Grand Vizier to the local authorities, and will, I have no doubt, be able to furnish me with useful and important information.

I have the honour to inclose copy of the instructions which I have given to Mr. Longworth, and I trust that your Lordship will approve of the arrangement that I have made with him to pay his travelling expenses and 1*l.* a-day during the time he is employed on his present mission. I should be glad to be informed whether I am to include the amount in the extraordinary expenses of the Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Mr. Layard to Consul-General Longworth.

(Very Confidential.)
Constantinople, November 23, 1877.

Sir,

AS you have, at my request, undertaken to visit Thessaly and Epirus, in order to report to me upon their present condition, I have to give you the following instructions for your guidance:—

You will endeavour to obtain full and trustworthy information as to the state of the population of these provinces, both Mussulmans and Christians, and especially as to the feelings of the latter towards the Turkish Government. It is important that you should ascertain whether agents from Greece or elsewhere are seeking to cause discontent amongst the Christians, and to incite them to rise against the Turkish rule at once, or in the event of an invasion of the Turkish territory from Greece. If agents are so employed it would be desirable to learn, if possible, who they are, and in what parts of Thessaly and Epirus their intrigues are principally carried on, and with what result.

Your attention should be particularly directed to what is passing on the Greek frontiers. You should ascertain whether there is any reason to believe that bands from Greece have recently crossed into Turkey, or are threatening to do so; and, if so, whether their object is simply to plunder or to raise the Greek population.

The Turkish Government has recently sent into Thessaly large bodies of irregular troops, composed of Ghegas, or Northern Albanians, and, it is stated, of Zebecks. I have been informed that they have committed great excesses upon the Christian population, and in some instances upon Mussulmans. I inclose on this subject, for your information, a

Memorandum and copies of letters from residents at Ampelakia, and extracts from newspapers published at Athens. I wish you to ascertain whether the statements contained in these documents are well-founded, either by visiting the towns and villages the inhabitants of which are alleged to have been robbed and outraged, or by obtaining evidence from persons acquainted with them, and who may speak from personal knowledge or trustworthy information.

You will inform me whether the authorities have endeavoured to prevent or check the proceedings of these irregular troops, and with what result; whether the excesses of which just complaint has been made still continue; whether steps have been taken to put a stop to them; whether their authors have been punished; and whether the plundered property has been recovered and restored to its proper owners.

It has been stated to me that the Ghegas are now being withdrawn and sent back to their homes. You will endeavour to learn whether such is the case. I should be glad to have, if possible, the number of irregular troops actually in Thessaly and Epirus, and the places at which they are principally stationed.

Any information as to the relative numbers of the Mussulman and Greek populations in the provinces you are about to visit, and as to their local distribution, would be valuable. I have to request you to turn your attention to this subject.

It is scarcely necessary for me to point out to you other matters upon which it is desirable that you should report to me. They will, no doubt, suggest themselves to you.

I desire particularly to impress upon you the importance of obtaining your information from Mussulman and Christian sources alike, and of taking every possible care that it be trustworthy.

Your object should be to ascertain the truth. You will endeavour to judge and report to me with complete impartiality. You will be on your guard against exaggerated statements, and you will endeavour to verify such as may be made to you, from whatever quarter they may come.

You will take care not to cause suspicion to the Turkish authorities by your proceedings. Your demeanour towards them should be courteous and conciliatory, and you should on all occasions place yourself in frank communication with them, receiving, however, with proper caution the statements which they may make to you for the purpose of influencing your judgment.

You will write to me whenever you have a safe opportunity, but you will not trust letters which contain information of importance to the post.

I inclose letters of recommendation for you to the Turkish authorities and Her Majesty's Consuls and Vice-Consuls at the principal places on your route.

You will visit such parts of Thessaly and Epirus as you may think necessary, and you will keep me informed of your movements, in order that I may be able to communicate with you. Your travelling expenses will be paid you, with the addition of 1*l.* sterling a-day.

You will keep and render a full account of those expenses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 53.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 8.)

(No. 1393. Confidential.)
Constantinople, November 24, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD an opportunity of speaking to the Grand Vizier yesterday about the Geshoffs. His Highness seemed inclined to treat them as considerately and leniently as possible under the circumstances. He did not, he said, desire to keep them as prisoners, but would be willing to allow them complete liberty, on condition, however, that they would not leave the country. His Highness proposed that they should be sent to some city where they could live without prejudice to their health and comfort, remaining, however, under "surveillance" until the end of the war, when they would be free to go where they liked. He mentioned Aleppo as a suitable city for their residence, but did not insist upon that particular place, if one could be indicated equally convenient.

It appeared to me that this proposal was fair and reasonable. The English and American Consuls could be instructed to see that the Geshoffs were properly treated, and

that the promise made to me with regard to them are carried out. I promised his Highness to speak to my American colleague, and to obtain his consent to the proposed arrangement.

If the Geshoffs are permitted to leave the country, they may go to England or the United States, and there on their friends by appealing to public feeling on their behalf, may provoke a fresh Bulgarian "atrocity" agitation, which would lead to serious mischief, and perhaps frustrate the efforts of those who are endeavouring to bring this unhappy war to an end. It would scarcely be fair, even upon Turks, to insist upon their taking a measure which might have this result,—especially when we have no right, legal or moral, to do so.

After seeing the Grand Vizier, I called upon Mr. Maynard, and informed him of my conversation with his Highness. I found him disposed to insist that John Geshoff, one of the prisoners, should be delivered over to him unconditionally, on the ground that he was in the service of the United States at the time of his arrest. The circumstances of his appointment as American Vice-Consul at Philippopoli have been communicated to your Lordship in my despatch No. 1041 of the 7th September last. Mr. Maynard admitted to me that Mr. John Geshoff had retired for some time to act as United States' Vice-Consul, and that it was only on Mr. Schuyler's return to Constantinople about three months ago, that he applied for the Firman, which had been granted before, but which did not reach Philippopoli until after his arrest. It is highly probable that it was with the view to obtain the protection of the United States' Legation that he was anxious to have his exequatur.

I pointed out to Mr. Maynard that it was stated in that document that it was given on the express condition that the person appointed was not a Turkish subject. He did not deny that such was the case, but maintained that international courtesy and comity required that the objection to M. Geshoff should have been taken before. The Turkish Government, on the other hand, declare that M. Geshoff was represented to them as being a British subject, which I do not think improbable, and that it was impossible to recognize in the name given by the American Legation M. Geshoff.

Mr. Maynard accused the Turkish Government of great inhumanity in detaining the families and relations of the Geshoffs, including women and children, in Constantinople, and complained that he had been refused permission to see them or to send his son to distribute to them. He added that he had heard that they were badly lodged and were suffering from privations. He ended, however, by saying that he would take my advice, but the proposal of the Grand Vizier should be accepted, into consideration. I ventured to ask your Lordship to be so good as say a word on the subject at Washington, with a view to settling this matter.

When with Server Pasha to-day, I advised his Excellency to accede to Mr. Maynard's request to have access to the prisoners. To this he readily consented, on condition, however, that Al Schuyler were not the person chosen to communicate with them. His Excellency informed me that they would probably be removed with their families to Cavalla, a town situated on the Aegean shore at the entrance to the Sea of Marmora, where they would remain until a decision was come to as to their place of exile.

I have requested Mr. Dragoumis Mavrocordato to entertain [illegible] the prisoners and their families are treated, and to report to me on the subject. I shall endeavour to prevail upon the Porte not to insist upon making the relations of the Geshoffs with them

Server Pasha told me to-day that [illegible] caption of the Geshoffs [illegible] Russians immediately after they had crossed the Danube, and had been named by them Assistant Civil Governor of Sistova.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 54.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 8.*)

(No. 1394. Secret.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, November 24, 1877.*

THE fall of Kars was not officially known to the Porte until the Wednesday night (the 21st), when a telegram from Mukhtar Pasha stated that an officer on the German staff had been sent to announce to him the capture of the fortress, and to demand the surrender of Erzeroum. The German Ambassador had, however, learnt the event from Berlin on Monday morning (the 19th). He hastened, of course, to communicate the intelligence to the Greek Minister. I chanced to meet M. Charlemagne at Server Pasha's house in the middle of the day. Drawing a paper out of his pocket, he said that it was a telegram from M. Tricoupi, acquainting him that the Russian Minister at Athens had informed the Hellenic Government officially that Kars had been taken by assault on the previous day. I have no reason to know that he had received no such telegram; but one must not expect too great accuracy from that quarter.

The Turks were unwilling to believe in this fresh disaster until it was confirmed by the telegram from Moukhtar Pasha. They have received the news, with their usual resignation. As they were not elated by unexpected victories, so they are not depressed by untoward defeats. It is curious and instructive to watch the behaviour of this much abused and "anti-human" people in the face of calamities which would drive any other race to almost utter despair. They bear their misfortunes with patience and dignity, trusting in God and their right.

The newspapers which represent Turkish public opinion do not attempt to conceal the magnitude of the disaster which has befallen the Empire in the loss of an historic fortress—one of its bulwarks; but they exhort the people to make renewed efforts and fresh sacrifices, to maintain their independence, and to resist to the end an implacable enemy who is bent upon their destruction.

The Grand Vizier called upon me this morning, on his way to the Palace. His language was similar to that of the public journals. His Highness said that the Turkish people were not discouraged by this great calamity, but were determined to persist in the struggle. The Sultan was about to call [illegible] more men under arms at once. Some would be sent to reinforce Mehemet Ali Pasha, but they were principally intended for the defence of Adrianople, and the lines of Bujuk Tchekmedje and those at Gallipoli. I urged upon him the great importance of having forces sufficient and ready to foil the latter in case of a successful advance of the Russians upon Adrianople. He promised that this should be attended to without delay.

His Highness informed me that Mehemet Ali Pasha was rapidly concentrating his troops, and that within a very few days he would have sixty battalions under his command. He could then make a combined movement with Suleiman and Reouf Pashas for the relief of Plevna. If Osman Pasha could hold out for a few days more, there was hope that the attempt might prove successful. Everything, his Highness said, depended upon Plevna. If Osman Pasha could, with the aid of the relieving army, compel the Russians to raise the investment, or could withdraw from it unbeaten, the Russian army might yet be compelled to abandon the campaign in Bulgaria.

I asked the Grand Vizier whether full reliance could be placed upon Suleiman Pasha. I could only speak, I said, from report, but an impression undoubtedly existed that that General was of an exceedingly jealous and ambitious nature, and he was suspected of desiring the discomfiture of a rival who had achieved a world-wide reputation by his brilliant defence of Plevna. He was supposed to have brought about the fall of Mehemet Ali Pasha, by refusing to co-operate with him and his troops, in order to obtain the supreme command. Raouf Pasha, I was informed, had resigned as soon as Suleiman Pasha had been appointed Serdar Ekrem (Generalissimo), declining to serve under a superior whom he mistrusted. I had heard, I said, that Suleiman Pasha was extremely unpopular with his officers, as they suspected that he was resolved not to attempt the relief of Osman Pasha, whose defeat he desired. If there were truth in the reports to which I alluded, success could scarcely be hoped for. I reminded his Highness that three months ago I had expressed my fears to him that Suleiman Pasha would prove "the fatal man" for Turkey. I trusted that my prediction would not be verified.

His Highness appeared a good deal disconcerted by what I had said. He admitted that Suleiman Pasha had been on bad terms with the other generals, but he could not believe him capable of the want of loyalty and patriotism attributed to him. The differences which had existed between them had, he assured me, been now made up. Raouf Pasha had withdrawn his resignation, and the three commanders were acting cordially together. They were in constant communication, and had agreed upon a combined and simultaneous movement, which would probably commence next week, for the relief of Plevna.

As regards Erzeroum, his Highness said that Moukhtar Pasha was doubtful as to whether he should be able to defend the place much longer. The fall of Kars would enable the Russians to concentrate their whole force against the city. If Erzeroum fell, another stand could be made at Erzinghian, where twelve battalions would arrive in a few days from Baghdad, and where further troops could be concentrated.

The loss of Kars and Erzeroum will place the whole of the province of Armenia in

the power of Russia. Batoum might still be defended for a short time with the assistance of iron-clads; but must eventually fall. The road from Erzeroum to Trebizond would be open, and, if it suited the Russian plans, this port could be occupied without serious resistance. The fleet could afford no help to it in winter from an open roadstead. Once in possession of this important province, Russia would probably not leave it again, or would, at any rate, retain that part of it which would enable her to carry out hereafter her designs upon Western Asia.

I have already ventured to submit to Her Majesty's Government my views as to the consequences of giving Russia the complete command of the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, of the north of Persia, and of Asia Minor. These consequences, although, perhaps, fatal to the influence and interests of England in the East, have unhappily been regarded with indifference by some English statesmen, who have, I fear, misled the public opinion of their country upon the subject. It is now probably too late to prevent the inevitable result.

The Grand Vizier, and, indeed, every Turkish statesman, is alive to the danger to Turkey, as well as to England, of the annexation by Russia of Armenia. The Grand Vizier dwelt upon it in his conversation with me to-day in forcible terms. He seemed to think that "British interests" being at last seriously threatened, Turkey might expect that the hand of England would be held out to her to prevent a catastrophe, which might in the end prove fatal to both countries. I could give no hope to his Highness that such would be the case. I could only remind him that Her Majesty's Government had declared their intention of taking no part in the war, and that as yet there was no reason to believe, as far as I was aware, that they would depart from their neutrality.

The Grand Vizier then drew a touching picture, with much emotion, of the shocking calamities which this "iniquitous" ("infame") war had already brought upon the Turkish Empire. Would the nations of Europe, his Highness asked, permit all this bloodshed and devastation to continue without making an attempt to stop them? Was it thus that they sought to promote the cause of humanity and civilization? His Highness stated that according to information received at the Porte more than 500,000 Mussulman inhabitants of Bulgaria and Roumelia, chiefly women and children, had been driven from their homes, and were wandering, almost without food and clothing, over the country to the south of the Balkans; a great part of them would perish by winter cold. He had given orders, he said, that they should be kept where they now were, and that every effort should be made, at whatever cost, to supply them with food. The Mohammedan population, terrified by the horrors and massacres committed by the Russians and Bulgarians, were flying on the approach of the Russian army. The war was waged upon innocent and defenceless women and children. It was one, he repeated, for the extermination of the Turkish race in Europe.

His Highness calculated the loss already sustained by the Mussulmans in Europe and Asia, including those who had fallen in battle, who had been made prisoners, who had been massacred in cold blood, and who had died from wounds, want, and exposure, at about 1,500,000. To these victims must be added, his Highness observed, those who would perish from the consequences of the war. The drain upon the Mahommedan population was so great that whole districts were left without cultivation, and famine was almost inevitable, as the fields were left untilled, and there had in many places been no hands to gather in the crops of this year.

In the face of such fearful and overwhelming calamities, could it be doubted, his Highness inquired, that Turkey desired peace? Yet he begged me to tell Her Majesty's Government that, anxious as the Sultan was to bring to an end this cruel war, both in order to spare his people further misfortunes and suffering, and to enable him to occupy himself with those reforms which he was bent upon carrying out for their better government, he and his Mahommedan subjects were ready and determined to shed the last drop of their blood in the defence of the honour and independence of their country.

Such, his Highness added, was the feeling of exasperation caused by the conduct of the Russians and Bulgarians towards the defenceless Mussulman populations, and by the sight of the innumerable victims of their cruelty and persecution, that he feared that if Plevna fell, and the Russian army were to advance upon Adrianople, the greatest disasters might befall the Christians. The Government would be powerless to prevent them. How could it do so with its army defeated and the country reduced to a state of anarchy by a ruthless invasion? Russia had excited the Christians to rise against their Sovereign, and to massacre their fellow subjects. She alone was responsible for the result.

I asked his Highness whether I was to understand from what he had said, that provided the honour and independence of Turkey were maintained, the Sultan was still

disposed to accept the mediation of a third Power with a view to bringing the war to an end, and was prepared to consider the terms of peace which might be put forward by Russia. He replied, that His Majesty was still ready to listen to overtures for peace and to accept any mediation which might conduce to that result, on the conditions he had mentioned. But he could not say whether the terms which Russia might offer were such as could be even taken into consideration. It was first necessary for him to know what they were likely to be. He would, he added, be very grateful to Her Majesty's Government, if they would ascertain what they were, and would communicate them to him through me, confidentially and unofficially.

His Highness, however, is very anxious that nothing should be said, or done, to induce Russia to believe that Turkey is either discouraged by the reverses she has experienced, or is at the end of her resources. He sought to persuade me that she could still carry on a formidable resistance, and that she was prepared to make every sacrifice rather than submit to terms which would deprive her of territory, or compromise her independence. He seemed still to have hopes that events might happen which would arrest the progress of the Russian arms, and that the European Powers might at length be roused to the danger to themselves of a conquest and dismemberment of the Empire by Russia. The weather in Bulgaria and Armenia might yet, he thought, compel the Russians to abandon the siege of Plevna and Erzeroum, and might even expose them to a serious disaster. We were in no less danger in the spring, his Highness remarked, and suddenly fortune favoured us, and we drove the enemy back on all sides. The same thing may happen again. If Plevna can be relieved we shall have two powerful armies in Bulgaria, and the Russians will have great difficulty in maintaining their communications, and in supplying their army, which will be threatened and harassed on both flanks.

I endeavoured to point out to his Highness that the position of affairs had changed since last spring. Then Russia, unprepared for the task she had undertaken, and underrating the power of Turkey, and ignorant of her resources and of the courage and devotion of her soldiers, had invaded the Turkish Empire with inadequate forces. She had learnt her mistake, and was now seeking to remedy it by putting forth all her strength. She had large armies in Bulgaria and Armenia, and was daily sending reinforcements to them. She had Roumania, and would probably soon have Servia with her in the field. Greece was threatening an invasion. On the other hand the Porte had only the Mussulman population to depend upon, and that source was nearly exhausted. However, the only hope of salvation for the Empire might still consist in putting on a bold face, and convincing the Russians that Turkey could not even yet be crushed and dismembered without sacrifices which Russia would be unwilling to make, and dangers which prudence might lead her to avoid.

The condition of affairs is, however, most critical. The fall of Plevna may open the road to Constantinople. It is to be feared that with all the exertions the Porte is undoubtedly making, and the large number of men who are answering to the new call for troops, it will not have a sufficient force to check the advance of a Russian army upon Adrianople and the capital. Some military authorities are of opinion that in order to defend Constantinople and the Dardanelles, at least fifty battalions should be detached from the army of Suleiman Pasha, leaving the fortresses on the Danube and Shumla and Varna to be defended by their present garrisons. The command which the Porte has of the sea would enable it to do this without difficulty.

As far as I can judge from the tone of the Turkish press, and from what I learn from persons who are well acquainted with the opinions of Turks of all classes, the fall of Kars, although, no doubt, regarded as a great national calamity and a most serious blow to the Turkish Empire in Asia, has not had the effect of so far discouraging the Mussulman populations as to induce them to believe that future resistance to Russia would be hopeless, and that the time is come, or coming, for Turkey to accept any terms of peace that it may suit Russia to impose upon her. On the contrary, the general feeling amongst the Mahommedans would appear to be that the war should be carried on with a resolute determination not to yield whilst men and resources can yet be found to oppose an invasion, which they are convinced is intended to destroy the Turkish race and rule in Europe.

I shall not fail to continue to observe the state of public opinion as carefully as the means at my disposal will allow, and to keep Her Majesty's Government fully informed with regard to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 55.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1395.) *Constantinople, November 24, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Minister for Foreign Affairs has communicated to me the Circular which he has addressed to the Turkish Representatives abroad, and which Mussurus Pasha has, no doubt, communicated to your Lordship, relating to the statements made by the Hellenic Government with reference to the conduct of the Turkish irregular troops in the Provinces of Thessaly and Epirus. In the copy sent to the Turkish Minister at Athens the following words are added:—"Je crois devoir appeler particulièrement votre attention sur la conduite du Consul de Grèce à Salonique, qui révèle suffisamment les tendances générales de son Gouvernement."

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 55.

Server Pasha to the Turkish Representatives abroad.

Le 28 Novembre, 1877.

POUR faire suite à ma dépêche télégraphique du 15 de ce mois, j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre sous ce pli copies d'un télégramme du Gouverneur-Général de Salonique et d'un rapport du Mutessarif de Tricala concernant les faits attribués à nos troupes auxiliaires dans les provinces limitrophes de la Grèce.

La lecture de ces pièces vous permettra, M. ——, d'apprécier et de faire apprécier autour de vous l'injustice des imputations dirigées contre nos troupes et de faire constater que tous ces prétendus griefs se bornent en réalité à quelques faits isolés de la nature de ceux qui peuvent se produire dans n'importe quel pays au milieu de circonstances analogues. Vous pouvez d'ailleurs affirmer que le Gouvernement Impérial a déjà pris toutes les mesures propres à empêcher le renouvellement de pareils faits. Il est malheureusement trop certain que ces imputations malveillantes sont dirigées en tout ou moins encouragées par le Gouvernement Hellénique, qui cherche ainsi à justifier devant les Représentants du pays et aux yeux des Cabinets étrangers les préparatifs militaires qui ont éveillé à bon droit notre attention. Il est donc indispensable que l'opinion publique soit édifiée sur l'origine et le véritable caractère de ces récriminations aux moyens desquelles le Gouvernement Hellénique espère donner le change sur ses armements par la prétendue nécessité de se défendre sur ses frontières contre un danger qu'il sait bien n'avoir jamais existé.

(Pour Athènes): "Je crois devoir appeler particulièrement votre attention sur la conduite du Consul de Grèce à Salonique qui révèle suffisamment les tendances générales de son Gouvernement."

Votre Excellence comprendra l'importance que nous attachons à faire connaître la vérité sur les visées de la Grèce et sur le véritable mobile de ces injustes insinuations contre les troupes Impériales.

No. 56.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1398.) *Constantinople, November 25, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Prevesa on the subject of irregulars at Janina.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 56.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Layard.

Prevesa, November 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed translation of M. Kyprioti's despatch of the 12th instant, reporting fresh arrivals of irregular troops at Janina from

Constantinople and elsewhere, as well as the recruitment of some 350 more from the local prisons. The latter, it appears, are destined for Bulgaria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 56.

M. Kyprioti to Vice-Consul Blakeney.

(Translation.)

Sir, *Janina, November 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that since the departure for Thessaly of the Albanian irregulars, under the command of Tchaoush Agha Nebiuntcha, some 200 more, under the command of a certain Lutz Agha Tchelis, came here; but they seem to be more orderly than the former, who, besides all they committed here, also murdered a man on their way through Mitchovo.

Up to the present moment some 400 more reached this from Thessaly; they belong to different races and places, as shown by the variety of their costumes and arms. They were recruited at Constantinople, and about 700 were dispatched to Volo, so that the rest are also expected here. Those who have arrived have committed many robberies at the various villages situated along their route; and being engaged in this sort of work, they employed five days in coming from Mitchovo. The inhabitants of the villages through which they passed presented petitions to the chief military authority, Abdi Pasha, complaining of the above acts; and the Pasha having caused the accused to assemble in the barrack square for the purpose of inspection, ordered a search to be made in their quarters, where many of the goods stolen were discovered, which the Pasha restored to the proper owners after he showed them to those who had robbed them; he also strongly reprimanded them and threatened them with severe punishment should they do so a second time.

Government has recruited about 350 men from our prisons, and they are to be sent to the battle-fields in Bulgaria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. KYPRIOTI.

No. 57.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1399. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Pera, November 25, 1877.*

AMONGST the ships that have recently been seized in the Bosphorus by the Turkish Government for breach of the blockade of the Russian ports in the Black Sea are two Italian vessels. I have received from a confidential source the following report as to the steps taken by the Italian Legation for their release.

At the time of the declaration of the blockade a period of delay was granted to neutral vessels in Russian ports to enable them to leave with their cargoes. After the expiration of this period two Italian vessels, not having completed their lading, were blockaded, and the Italian Legation has ever since been continually urging the Porte to grant them permission to pass out, but this request has been steadily refused. The Italian Minister having lately addressed a fresh note on the subject, the Porte seemed inclined to yield, and to extend the permission, in addition, to all other neutral vessels similarly circumstanced.

In the meanwhile, before the Porte had come to a decision in the matter, the two Italian vessels alluded to, tired of waiting for the result of the negotiations, and encouraged by the example of Greek vessels which successfully ran the blockade, put to sea, and arrived safely at the entrance of the Bosphorus. There, however, they were seized, and handed over to the jurisdiction of the Prize Court.

The Italian Legation is taking active steps to secure their release, and as it is fully cognizant of M. Zariti's dealings, and suspects that the three condemned Greek vessels will be surreptitiously released, it is carefully watching the proceedings in this matter, in order to make use of them in its own interest. In any case, the Italian Legation does not seem inclined to accede to the doctrine that neutral vessels which have run a blockade may be seized later on in the course of their voyage.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 58.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1400.)
Constantinople, November 25, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Sultan has issued an Irade, or Imperial Decree (of which a copy is inclosed), ordering the formation of an army of reserve of 150,000 men, conjointly with the Civic Guard recently called to arms, for the defence of the country.

His Majesty commands that, in consequence of the perfect equality which exists amongst all his subjects, non-Mussulmans as well as Mussulmans, shall be incorporated in the Civic Guard of Constantinople.

The Civic Guard is declared to be for the defence, in case of urgency, of the capital and Adrianople, and of other important strategical points, such as Boulair.

This is the first real step towards placing Christians on an equality with the Mahommedans. Of course, it will not be acceptable to those who considered it a great privilege rather than a wrong to be exempted, on the payment of a small tax, from the hardships of the conscription and military service; but it has been favourably received by some of the most influential and enlightened Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 58.

Decree.

IL est à la connaissance de tous que depuis deux ans les graves événements intérieurs dont le passé ne nous offre pas d'exemple, ainsi que l'ambition persévérante de la Russie, ont donné naissance à la guerre actuelle que nous avons dû accepter pour maintenir les droits et l'indépendance de notre patrie. Le monde entier a pu apprécier la grandeur des efforts déployés par le Gouvernement Impérial et le concours que ce dernier a rencontré dans ses fidèles sujets jusqu'à ce jour.

Le moment est venu où un nouvel élan, par mesure de prévoyance, doit être donné à ce concours pour assurer le pays contre les desseins de l'ennemi.

En conséquence de ce qui précède, un Iradé Impérial ordonne la formation d'une armée de réserve de 150,000 hommes, concurremment avec la nouvelle milice (Garde Civique) récemment formée et appelée sous les armes.

Toutes les dispositions sont prises pour la mise à exécution immédiate de l'Ordonnance Impériale. Attendu qu'il est avéré que la sauvegarde des droits et de la dignité du peuple Ottoman est l'objet constant de la sollicitude de Sa Majesté le Sultan; attendu que Sa Majesté a pu constater, par des preuves irrécusables, que ses fidèles sujets partageaient unanimement ses sentiments, surtout devant leur empressement digne d'éloges à satisfaire aux devoirs qui leur ont été imposés par la formation de la Garde Civique, créée dans le but de maintenir l'ordre et la sécurité dans l'Empire, c'est-à-dire de participer à la défense de la patrie en restant chacun dans son pays natal; attendu que tous les Ottomans sont appelés au même titre et d'après la Constitution à remplir cette mission; en conséquence, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, en vertu de l'égalité parfaite dont jouissent tous ses sujets, a daigné ordonner que ses sujets non-Musulmans qui ont atteint l'âge prescrit par le règlement *ad hoc* seront incorporés dans les bataillons de la Garde Civique en formation à Constantinople.

Il y a tout lieu d'espérer que les sujets Ottomans non-Musulmans, appréciant à sa juste valeur les hautes marques de confiance dont ils sont l'objet, de la part du Souverain, s'empresseront de satisfaire avec orgueil au devoir sacré auquel ils sont conviés.

Ainsi qu'il est dit ci-dessus, attendu que l'armée de réserve qui a été formée est aussi appelée à participer à la défense du territoire; qu'une partie des hommes qui la composeront devant être fournie par la Garde Civique, les Gardes Civiques de Constantinople sont appelés, en cas d'urgence, à la défense de la capitale, et ceux d'Andrinople à la défense de cette ville et, éventuellement, à celles des points stratégiques tels que Boukûr et autres.

Un Commandant spécial sera désigné pour l'armée de réserve.

No. 59.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1405.)
Constantinople, November 26, 1877.

My Lord,

CONSUL-GENERAL ELDRIDGE, in his despatch to me of the 9th instant (copy transmitted to your Lordship), states that the question of the election of Deputies for Mount Lebanon to the Turkish Parliament still remains in abeyance, and that he is informed by his French colleague that he has received instructions from Paris and Constantinople to oppose such election, as contrary to the principles of the "Règlement du Liban." Mr. Eldridge finds no reason to alter the opinion that he expressed in his despatch to Mr. Jocelyn of the 3rd March last, that "he does not see in what way the election of Deputies to the National Assembly, which is to frame laws for the whole of the Turkish Empire, and which are equally applicable to the Lebanon, would affect the special administrative privileges which were accorded by the Porte to the Mountain, and guaranteed by the Great Powers."

I entirely agree in Mr. Eldridge's opinion. Moreover, I consider it a matter of considerable importance that Mount Lebanon, and other parts of the Turkish Empire enjoying exceptional local administration and privileges, should be represented in a Parliament which has to deal with the general interests of the Empire. But I should be glad to receive your Lordship's views and instructions on the subject to guide me, should the question be mooted by the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 60.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1412. Confidential.)
Constantinople, November 27, 1877.

My Lord,

THE account that the Grand Vizier gives of the proceedings of the Montenegrins and of their attack upon Antivari agrees with Consul Kirby Green's telegram to me, of which I transmitted a copy to your Lordship on the 25th instant.

His Highness states that they are laying waste the country around Scutari and Antivari, burning the villages and committing every manner of outrage upon their inhabitants. He says that the Porte has now no troops to spare for the protection of the districts ravaged by these savage mountaineers, but that accounts will be settled with them hereafter. In the meanwhile some ships of war have been sent to Antivari to prevent the Montenegrins occupying that port, which, I understand, will be closed against foreign shipping.

The Porte has been informed that the Prince of Montenegro has entered into communication with the Greek Government, and has proposed to come to an arrangement with it for the invasion and occupation of the whole of Southern Albania. I have no means of ascertaining whether there be any truth in this report.

The raid of the Montenegrins into Albania will add to the carnage, devastation, and suffering, brought upon this unhappy country by a war waged in the name of humanity and civilization.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I understand that some troops have been ordered from Crete and elsewhere to Antivari.

No. 61.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1413. Secret.)
Constantinople, November 27, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my Secret despatch No. 1394 of the 23rd instant, I have the honour to state that at my request a gentleman well acquainted with the leading

Mahommedans in Constantinople, of great experience, and capable of forming a correct and trustworthy judgment as to public opinion, has been visiting the Ministers, and many important personages in and out of office, with a view to ascertaining the state of public feeling as to carrying on the war.

His impression is, very decidedly, that the Mussulman population is resolved upon continuing the struggle with Russia until the resources of the Empire are utterly exhausted rather than consent to a humiliating peace. My informant states to me that the language held to him by all the persons he has seen, including the present Ministers, and most of the members of former Governments, convinces him that this resolution is perfectly sincere.

A Council has been held under the presidency of the Sultan, at which it was decided to resist the Russian invasion in Europe and Asia as long as men could be found in the Empire capable of bearing arms.

My informant also tells me that he found no inclination in any quarter to come to a separate and direct understanding with Russia, although a good deal of irritation exists against England, who is accused of having abandoned Turkey to her fate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 61 A.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1415.)

Pera, November 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE received the inclosed Memorandum with reference to the seizure in the Bosphorus of certain vessels containing cargoes belonging to British subjects for breaking the blockade in the Black Sea.

It has been drawn up by the legal adviser of the owners of the cargoes in question. I have promised to submit it to your Lordship for your consideration. Your Lordship will observe that it is suggested that the Turkish Government would act wisely in issuing a new official notification of the blockade, and releasing the vessels recently captured.

I would venture to ask your Lordship to submit this Memorandum to the Law Officers of the Crown, and to inform me of their opinion by telegraph.

The question at issue is one of considerable importance, and is likely to cause very considerable embarrassment to the Porte. The captured vessels were condemned by the Turkish Prize Court, as your Lordship has been informed by my despatches on the subject, in consequence of my strong representations as to the manner in which certain ships were permitted to pass through the blockade.

As English, Italian, and Greek interests are concerned in this question, perhaps the best way of settling it would be the one proposed in the Memorandum. Should your Lordship be of opinion that I could with propriety recommend it to the Porte, it would probably be at once accepted.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 61 A.

Memorandum upon the question whether Vessels arrested at Anchor in the Bosphorus under Neutral Flags, and not carrying Contraband of War, ought to be considered as Prize.

SEVERAL vessels, under various neutral flags, containing cargo usually belonging to other persons than the vessels, and, in the case of three of them, to British subjects, have been arrested while at anchor in the Bosphorus by the Ottoman authorities, on the ground that they had run the blockade from Russia, or to and from Russia.

The Prize Court established by the Turks has decided in several instances, and uniformly until Saturday, the 17th November, 1877, that if a vessel had succeeded in escaping the blockading squadron, she was free. On Saturday, however, the Court decided that a vessel might be captured in the Bosphorus.

I respectfully submit to your Excellency that this decision is at least of such doubtful legality that, under the circumstances, it would be expedient that the Porte should issue new regulations, and allow the small remaining vessels which are now under arrest to be set at liberty.

The doubts which arise upon the legality are the following:—

1. The official notification of the blockade evidently only contemplated stoppage by a squadron. Article 2 of such Notification states only that the blockade "sera maintenu par une flotte Ottomane en force suffisante." Up to Saturday last this was evidently the view taken by the Prize Court, which contemplates capture by the Imperial fleet, in accordance with this Article, as the sole means of obtaining prize.

Had even the Imperial authorities contemplated the enforcement of a blockade off the mouth of the Bosphorus, it would have been their duty to have stationed men-of-war there. It is notorious that they have not done so. A question might even be raised whether the blockade has been effective in accordance with the IVth Article of the Declaration of Paris, which provides, "Les blocus, pour être obligatoires, doivent être effectifs, c'est-à-dire maintenus par une force suffisante pour interdire réellement l'accès du littoral de l'ennemi."

Hardly any vessel has been captured, so far as I can learn, in either attempting to run in or out. Leaving, however, this general consideration apart, all the authorities agree that a notice of the blockade must be properly given, and it is evident that the notice given by the Turkish authorities in Article 2 already quoted does not contemplate capture in the Bosphorus, but a maintenance "par une flotte Ottomane en force suffisante."

The truth, I have no doubt, is that the difference between the continental authorities and the English authorities on the question of capture influenced the Turkish legal advisers in drawing up the "Notification Officielle." English authorities claim the right of capture until the end of the voyage, or, in fact, anywhere on the high seas till the voyage is completed. Continental authorities urge that the blockading line once passed, unless in case of chase, blockade-runners are free. The Court of Prize adopted the continental rule until Saturday last (the 17th November), when they avowedly adopted the English rule instead. As, however, the "Notification Officielle" was framed with the first in view, it is insufficient to cover the new law introduced a week ago. The notification is, therefore, incomplete.

2. An arrest in the Bosphorus is, for Englishmen or other foreigners, a breach of the Capitulations. Such arrest is, therefore, an unlawful arrest. An English ship at anchor in the Turkish waters is held to be in English waters. Every Consular Court in the Levant founds its jurisdiction upon the recognition of the principle involved. The Turkish authorities have not even the right to arrest one of their own subjects on board of an English vessel; *à fortiori*, they have not the right to arrest the vessel itself. In the case, however, of the "Britannia," the "Matilde," "Bellegambe," and the "Azoff," the two former under the Italian flag, and the latter Greek, but all laden with cargoes belonging to British subjects, the Ottoman authorities have arrested ships at anchor in the Bosphorus. In other words, they have arrested neutral vessels not running the blockade, but at anchor in neutral waters. The arrest is not in the nature of a capture or prize in strict sense, but is the assumption of an illegal power.

3. It is notorious that the Ottoman authorities have not only allowed many vessels which they have known to have come from Russia to pass through the Bosphorus to Europe, but have given permission to vessels to go to Russia and to return. It is asserted by all the text-writers on the subject that if permission be given to one, it must be given to all. To refuse permission now, is to make a law with a retrospective effect.

For these reasons I would submit, in the interests of my clients, the owners of the cargoes before mentioned, that the Ottoman authorities would act wisely in issuing a new official notification, and in allowing present vessels captured under such doubtful circumstances to be free.

No. 61 B.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1416.)

Constantinople, November 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I INFORMED your Lordship in my despatch No. 1353, of the 17th instant that the Turkish Prize Court had condemned three Greek vessels for breach of the blockade in the Black Sea. Several others, I believe ten, have been seized. Amongst them are two ships belonging to Greek owners, but chartered by Italian subjects. They were unable to leave Nicolaieff and Odessa within the time accorded by the Turkish Government for the departure of shipping from Russian ports on the breaking out of the war. The Italian Government has been constantly pressing the Porte, but in vain, to permit them, as a special favour, to leave. At the same time Count Corti has been instructed to make remonstrances as to the inefficiency of the blockade. Your Lordship was, I believe,

requested to authorize me to join in those remonstrances. The Porte, in order to escape the pressure placed upon it by the Italian Government, hit upon the scheme of permitting all neutral vessels laden with corn to leave Russian ports in the Black Sea on condition that their cargoes were sold at Constantinople. But it abandoned the idea at once on being informed that Her Majesty's Government considered any such arrangement as a violation of the law of blockade.

It appears that the Italian charterers of the two vessels in question, finding that Greek vessels, through permits abusively given to their owners, or by other means, were able to pass through the blockade with impunity, determined to try their chance also. Unfortunately for them, their ships arrived in the Bosphorus at the time that, in consequence of the representations I had been instructed to make by your Lordship, the Porte had determined to take strong measures to put an end to the disgraceful proceedings that had enabled certain Greek merchants here to evade the blockade, and the Italian ships were seized with others.

The Italian Government now insists, in peremptory and threatening terms, that these vessels shall be at once released, founding its demand, as far as I can understand, upon two grounds, 1st, that there has never been a sufficient number of Turkish ships cruizing off the Russian coast to enforce an effective blockade; and, 2nd, that even admitting that the blockade has been effective, vessels that have once succeeded in passing through it are not afterwards liable to seizure.

Count Corti, with his usual prudence and moderation, has not yet presented the demand of his Government to the Porte in an official form. It is generally understood here that as the Greek ships condemned belong to M. Zarifi and other Greek merchants who enjoy great influence, and know how to manage such affairs, some means will be found to indemnify their owners, either by indirectly restoring the ships and their cargoes, or by some kind of compensation for their loss. Count Corti hopes that the Italians also will be no losers in the end, and that a disagreeable and complicated question between his Government and the Porte will be avoided.

I have been in confidential communication with one of the members of the Prize Court, who enjoys the reputation of being an upright and honourable man. He has given me the following account of what has taken place in the matter of the captured vessels. He was the only member of the Court who, in the first instance, was in favour of condemning them. The remaining members were for releasing them, and they had previously released two other ships belonging to a Greek which had been seized under similar conditions. There is strong reason for suspecting that more than one of these functionaries had been bribed. They maintained that, according to the principles which guided the French Prize Courts in similar cases, a vessel which had once escaped a blockade could not afterwards be captured. My informant supported the opposite view by the practice of the English and American Prize Courts, and on the authority of Wheaton, Ortolan, and other writers on international law of scarcely less weight.

Whilst the Court was deliberating on the subject, Said Pasha, the head of the Sultan's military staff and Acting Minister of Marine, acquainted with the representations that I had made as to the non-efficiency of the blockade, wrote a letter to the Grand Vizier, couched in very strong language, accusing the Prize Court of conniving at the breach of the blockade by not condemning vessels which had been seized and brought before them, insinuating, in fact, that its members, or some of them, had been corrupted. The Grand Vizier communicated this letter to the Court, and expressed at the same time his hope that the vessels would be condemned, as the British Government had made a very strong remonstrance on the subject of the inefficiency of the blockade. The Court, perplexed as to the decision that they should take, sent for Captain Woods, a British naval officer in the Civil Service of the Porte, who is generally consulted in such matters. He proved to their satisfaction, by reference to the English Admiralty Instructions and to English writers on international law, that the vessels had been lawfully seized. The Court availed itself of his opinion to condemn them. But the members, considering their honour and dignity offended by Said Pasha's letter, sent in their resignation in a body to the Grand Vizier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 61 c.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1418.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 28, 1877.*

AT the request of the Porte your Lordship was good enough to direct Consul Ricketts to inquire whether there were any families who had been removed by the Russian authorities from the Turkish territory in Armenia, and were desirous of returning to their homes.

He has replied in a telegram of the 18th instant, which your Lordship transmitted to me, that there were 500 such families.

The Grand Vizier, to whom I communicated Mr. Ricketts' answer, begs me to ask your Lordship to intercede with the Russian Government to permit these families to come back to their villages. His Highness observed that, partly owing to my representations, some Abkasian families, who complained that they had been brought away from their country against their will, have been sent back to it by the Turkish Government, and he felt convinced that your Lordship, in a spirit of justice, would direct similar representations to be made in behalf of Turkish subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 61 d.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1419.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 28, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a proclamation addressed by the Grand Vizier in the name of the Sultan to the Bulgarians who have been concerned in the insurrection, inviting them to return to their allegiance, and promising them His Majesty's pardon. Its terms are liberal, kindly, and generous, and I am convinced that it expresses the true sentiments of His Majesty. I trust that it may have some effect, and may induce many who are now suffering the greatest privations to return to their villages.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 61 d.

Proclamation.

Bulgares!

DEPUIS des siècles vous vivrez sous l'égide paternelle du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, vous jouissiez de votre nationalité et vous exerciez votre culte en toute liberté et sécurité. En un mot, en vivant avec vos compatriotes Musulmans comme véritables frères et en exerçant librement votre commerce et votre industrie vous offriez l'exemple d'une famille parfaitement heureuse.

Chacun pouvait constater les progrès que, grâce à la sollicitude et au concours bienveillant du Gouvernement Impérial, vous accomplissiez dans l'instruction publique, l'agriculture, et les arts; et la part que vous était réservée dans l'administration du pays allait chaque jour en augmentant, le Gouvernement Impérial s'empressant de vous procurer pour vos affaires religieuses toutes les facilités qu'il était dans son pouvoir de vous accorder. En présence de ces bienfaits Sa Majesté le Sultan, notre auguste Souverain, était en droit d'attendre de votre part les plus grandes preuves de fidélité et de dévouement, lorsque qu'un certain nombre d'entre vous, se laissant entraîner par les promesses trompeuses des agitateurs, sont sortis du droit chemin et de la voie de la conciliation pour lever ouvertement l'étendard de la révolte.

Cette conduite était de nature à surprendre le monde entier, et les actes de cruautés qui ont été connus ont vivement affligé le cœur de Sa Majesté le Sultan, notre magnanime bienfaiteur.

Toutefois je suis persuadé que si ces individus dont l'audace égalait l'ignorance avaient seulement regardé autour d'eux, ils auraient constaté de leurs propres yeux que les nations qu'on leur représentait comme vivant dans un bonheur parfait enduraient au contraire les plus grandes souffrances et étaient privées de tout espèce de libertés, et qu'enfin les mots d'autonomie et de nationalité qu'on leur faisait entendre, n'étaient qu'une supercherie

grossière destinée à les tromper et à les entraîner dans la voie fatale qu'ils ont malheureusement suivie, et ils auraient à l'instar de leurs coreligionnaires restés fidèles, apprécié à sa juste valeur le régime paternel sous lequel ils vivaient.

Ils ne se seraient départis sur aucun point des principes de l'honneur et de la loyauté.

Ils ne se seraient pas faits les instruments aveugles de la ruine de leur propre pays.

Mais je rends grâce à Dieu de pouvoir proclamer à l'honneur de la nation Bulgare que le nombre de ces hommes aveugles ne constitue qu'une faible minorité, tandis que la grande majorité est restée fidèle à ces principes.

Bulgares fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté! sachez que notre auguste Souverain, dont nous devions être fiers d'être les sujets, est animé de tels sentiments de justice et de clémence que, loin de retirer au peuple Bulgare son affection et sa sollicitude par suite des crimes commis par une faible minorité égarée qui elle-même n'avait point la conscience de ses actes, est disposé à accorder le pardon à tous ceux qui, revenus de leur égarement, feraient appel à sa magnanimité.

Bulgares!

Ceux d'entre vous qui effrayés des crimes commis par leurs compatriotes ont abandonné leurs foyers et leurs villages et se sont réfugiés dans les montagnes, de peur d'être exposés dans leurs habitations à des punitions ou à des représailles, doivent être rassurés sur leur sort.

Par ordre de Sa Majesté le Sultan je les invite à rentrer dans leurs foyers. La Constitution octroyée par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan répond aussi bien dans le présent que dans l'avenir de la sécurité de tous.

Bulgares!

Les fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté peuvent compter aujourd'hui plus que jamais sur l'aide et la protection des autorités Impériales. Tous ceux qui se permettraient de maltraiter les fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté seront passibles des peines prévues par la loi.

Bulgares!

C'est à vous maintenant de profiter de ces avantages que je vous offre solennellement au nom du Sultan.

Ceux-là qui, refusant de profiter de ces avantages, continueraient à laisser leurs femmes et leurs enfants exposés aux rigueurs de la saison en les tenant éloignés de leurs maisons et en les condamnant aux privations cruelles d'une vie d'aventure, ceux-là seront seuls chargés devant Dieu et devant les hommes, de l'opprobre des maux qu'ils auront causés.

No. 62.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 1420.)
My Lord, *Pera, November 28, 1877.*

IN pursuance of my instructions, Dragoman Bilézikdji visited the Messrs. Geshoff on the 26th instant. He was at once admitted to see them by order of the Minister of Police, Hamdi Pasha. He found them in a large and airy room in the apartments occupied by Colonel Ahmet Bey, used for the detention of political prisoners, in a building adjoining the Ministry of Police.

They stated that they had no reason to complain of their treatment; that they were permitted to receive their families, and that every consideration was shown them by the prison authorities.

They protested, however, against what they alleged to be their illegal arrest and imprisonment.

M. Bilézikdji afterwards called upon their families. They occupied a small inn at Constantinople containing only three rooms, which were damp, dirty, and unwholesome. They appeared to be suffering from privations, and to be kept under unnecessary restraint.

I at once represented their condition to the Grand Vizier, who expressed his regret that he had not been informed of it before, and gave immediate orders that a suitable house should be provided for them at Kadikeui.

This was done at once, and on the following morning the Messrs. Geshoffs and their families were removed to that village. I sent M. Bilézikdji to see them, and I inclose a copy of his report to me of his visit. Your Lordship will observe that they are now

properly lodged, and appear to have nothing to complain of, except that the police agents have free access to their apartments. I will endeavour to have this remedied.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 62.

M. Bilézikdji to Mr. Layard.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Pera, le 27 Novembre, 1877.*

CONFORMÉMENT aux ordres que votre Excellence a bien voulu me donner, j'ai été aujourd'hui à Cadikeuy pour visiter MM. Geshoff.

Toute leur famille, hommes, femmes, et enfants y compris, est déjà installée dans le quartier dit "Muhurdar," dans une grande et belle maison.

On y jouit d'un air pure et d'une vue magnifique.

Messieurs et Mesdames Geshoff ont été vivement touchés de la bonté de votre Excellence, dont ils ont été l'objet. Ils la remercient des démarches officieuses qu'elle a bien voulu faire pour leur nouvelle installation. Ils prient seulement votre Excellence de les favoriser une fois encore par sa bienveillance, en obtenant des ordres nécessaires pour que les agents de la police de sureté qui demeurent dans leur maison, qui prennent part à toute conversation, et se permettent des familiarités, les quittent un moment plus tôt, attendu que le corps de garde qui se trouve vis-à-vis la porte cochère de la maison et à une distance de trois mètres, serait suffisant pour faire la surveillance nécessaire.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) A. BILÉZIKDJI.

No. 63.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 60. Commercial.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, November 30, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a note from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that effectual measures have been adopted by the authorities here to prevent ships laden with cereals from the Black Sea ports, whence the exportation of grain is prohibited, from continuing their voyage.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 63.

Server Pasha to Mr. Layard.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Sublime Porte, le 29 Novembre, 1877.*

MALGRÉ la défense d'exportation de céréales de la capitale, quelques navires chargés de blé ou d'autres céréales, et venant de ports de la Mer Noire, d'où l'exportation de blé à l'étranger est prohibé, sont parvenus à continuer leur voyage pour l'Europe.

J'ai l'honneur de vous informer qu'à la suite d'une décision du Conseil des Ministres, des mesures efficaces ont été prises par les autorités maritimes et douanières pour empêcher toute exportation de cette nature.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SERVER.

No. 64.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 125. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, November 22, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that, having to make a communication to the Prince of Montenegro, I have telegraphed to M. Duby to inquire whether His Highness can receive me. I trust that the explanations I am about to furnish your Lordship by post

will be considered satisfactory, as, for the present, it is wished that the step I have taken should bear the appearance of having been originated by me. If your Lordship deems it necessary, my departure for the Montenegrin head-quarters can be stopped by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 65.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 126. Political.)

Scutari, November 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, in continuation of my telegram of this afternoon, that the Mouchir, Ali Saib Pasha, being anxious to know whether the Prince of Montenegro's present operations have a definite object, has asked me to visit His Highness' head-quarters to ascertain what that object may be, so that his Excellency may communicate it to the Porte for its consideration. Although Ali Saib Pasha wishes it to be understood that he has made the request without instructions, I am disposed to believe that his superiors have authorized it.

At the present moment the heavens reflect the fires of burning villages in the Kraina district, adjoining Scutari, on the western shores of the lake.

I have been unable to telegraph the foregoing information to Mr. Layard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 66.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 127. Political.)

Scutari, November 24, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Mr. Layard, giving his Excellency explanations about my proposed visit to the Montenegrin head-quarters, and concerning which I was, at first, unable to telegraph to his Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 66.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Scutari, November 24, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the request of Ali Saib Pasha of Wednesday last, that I should see Prince Nicholas in order to endeavour to find out whether His Highness would communicate to me for ultimate reference to the Porte the object he proposed to attain by his present operations, was based on the belief that I, as English Consul, was disposed to adopt any step likely to bring about an end of the evils of war which have now reached the immediate neighbourhood of Scutari.

The Pasha preferred that my communications with Prince Nicholas should be verbal instead of in writing, and it was on this account that I asked the Prince's Secretary, by telegraph, whether an interview could be arranged for me with His Highness.

In informing the Earl of Derby of the above, I added that my departure for the Montenegrin head-quarters would be subject to his Lordship's approval.

I am still awaiting answers both from his Lordship and from the Prince.

Ali Saib Pasha's military position is most critical, as he has not an adequate force to check the advance of the Montenegrins, whose enterprise has spread a panic among the Albanian population, which is escaping and abandoning its villages to the enemy's flames.

The Bashi-Bozouks are of no value as a fighting force, and the three or four battalions of Nizams and Redifs covering Scutari are being gradually driven back.

Podgoritza has had to depend solely on the means of defence already at its disposal, and the troops have evacuated Muric, as the danger to Scutari and Antivari has become the chief evil to be guarded against.

Ali Saib Pasha has telegraphed to Constantinople suggesting that a blockade of the Port of Antivari should be at once enforced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 67.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 128. Political.)

Scutari, November 25, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch, Political No. 124, of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the telegraphic reply I received this morning from M. Duby, informing me that, owing to the incessant movements necessitated by the military operations the Prince of Montenegro cannot fix a place where I could see His Highness, but that as soon as matters assumed a more settled shape His Highness will be glad to receive me.

I at once communicated to Ali Saib Pasha M. Duby's answer, but, as I did not even let the latter know that I had a message to convey to the Prince, I do not think the Pasha is quite justified in believing that the answer must be taken to mean the rejection by His Highness of all overtures for negotiations.

The Porte having now been fully informed of the use Ali Saib Pasha had proposed making of my good offices, his Excellency will not take any further steps without direct instructions from his superiors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 67.

M. Duby to Consul Kirby Green.

(Telegraphic.) *Cattaro, November 24, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

TELEGRAM Thursday requesting interview received Friday morning. Immediately transmitted. Reply just come. His Highness will see you with great pleasure, but considering his incessant movements, cannot fix appointment. As soon as operations assume more determinate and settled shape His Highness will be glad to receive you.

No. 68.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 129. Political.)

Scutari, November 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I CAN give your Lordship no definite report of the military operations of the Montenegrins as no one here, including the Turkish Commander-in-chief, has any positive information on the subject. For the last ten days also no mails have reached Scutari from the rest of Europe.

I, however, can state that nearly the whole of the Kraina, on the western shores of the lake, and the districts of Antivari and Anemalit, have fallen into the hands of the Montenegrins, who must have burned the majority of the villages, as columns of smoke and flames have for days past been visible from Scutari, and as many of the inhabitants, Christians and Mahommedans, have been seeking shelter here with the remains of their chattels and flocks.

I am unable to give a reason for the destruction of property by the Montenegrins, the Albanians declaring that no real resistance has been offered to their progress.

About 7,000 so-called volunteers have arrived from Middle Albania, and with them a certain number of Christians, who, naturally, have come with less willingness than the Mahommedans. The day before yesterday eighty of the latter having deserted were

brought back and, as a punishment, sent to Spuz, to be there enrolled in a battalion of regular soldiers. To-day a military order was issued to the effect that all deserters will, in future, be shot.

Ali Saib Pasha is perfectly aware that, with auxiliaries of this stamp, the four battalions which he has been able to place at Gorica and on the Tarabosh,—positions only an hour distant from Scutari,—will not offer a very great obstruction to the advance of the enemy.

Three of the five steamers have been withdrawn from the lake, ostensibly as a defence for the River Boyana, but, possibly, in view of the danger from Montenegrin artillery on the western shores of the lake.

Muric was completely evacuated on the 21st by the Ottoman troops: the Montenegrins are, therefore, now only faced in Albania by the Turks at Spuz, Podgoritza, Dinoshi, and Helm on the eastern side of the lake, and at San Nicolo, Dulcigno, Gorica, and the Tarabosh to the west of Scutari.

Three transports, with 8,000 men, and two ironclads from Candia, are hourly expected at San Nicolo, and orders have already been sent by Ali Saib Pasha for the ironclads to bombard the Fondina fort on the Antivari Point, where the Montenegrins are reported to have raised new batteries.

On Saturday night, at about 8 o'clock, a very heavy bombardment of Antivari was commenced, and continued up to a late hour, but the authorities state that they have no news whether Antivari still holds out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 69.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 325. Confidential.)
Athens, November 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I THINK it appears to be quite evident, from the financial policy of the Greek Government, as reported to your Lordship in my despatches Nos. 318 and 324 of the 24th instant and of this day's date respectively, that the Government has every intention of continuing its military and naval preparations, and whatever the result of those preparations may be in a military point of view, it is, I think, quite certain that Greece will find herself involved in very serious financial difficulties.

If Greece obtains an addition to her territory, at which she is clearly aiming, either by force of arms or by concessions at a Conference, which she perhaps imagines she may obtain, the policy of her Government will continue to meet with the approval of the country, and she may by prudence and economy eventually extricate herself from her financial difficulties. But if Greece is doomed to disappointment in her aspirations to national aggrandizement, there will be such discontent in the country at the increase of taxation to meet the burdens of the State fruitlessly incurred, as to lead very possibly to serious internal complications.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 70.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 402. Confidential.)
Rome, December 4, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the telegram from Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Athens, repeated in your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date, in which he mentions having heard from M. Tricoupi that, in the event of Austria occupying Bosnia, Italy will, in that case, feel bound to occupy North Albania, and that an unofficial interchange of ideas on this point had taken place between Greece and Austria and Greece and Italy, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, in an interview which I had this morning with Signor Melegari, I brought this statement under his Excellency's notice.

I observed that so long as the rumours of Italian projects had been confined to sensational paragraphs in the newspapers, I had, as his Excellency was aware, paid very

little attention to them, but as the present report had reached us in a very different shape, I thought it my duty, and only right towards the Italian Government, to give his Excellency an opportunity of stating clearly whether or not the Italian Government had any such project as that attributed to them, and whether there had been any interchange of ideas, either officially or unofficially, with the Greek Government upon that question.

Signor Melegari, who evinced no slight vexation and annoyance at the revival of this report, was perfectly categorical in his reply. His Excellency authorized me to inform Her Majesty's Government that the Italian Government had no intention whatever of occupying any portion of Albania, and that there had never been any interchange of ideas with the Greek Government under any form whatever, unofficial or official, in reference to this subject.

Count Tornielli, whom I afterwards saw, confirmed this statement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 71.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)
Poradin, December 8, 1877.

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday, position attacked by Turks was Pamovo.

Russians, about 12,000, withdrawn to Jacov, with loss of about 50 officers and 2,000 men killed and wounded, and 11 guns.

They hope to hold present position.

Turkish advance menaced by a Russian force at Stataríca.

Please acknowledge receipt of this telegram, in order to show whether or not my telegrams arrive.

No. 72.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 523.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, December 8, 1877.

FOLLOWING received from Captain Fyfe:—

"Osman" Pasha believed to be at Plevna. Turks hold Berkoftza Pass, Lutibro. No snow except on highest mountains; military movements practicable everywhere."

No. 73.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 524. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)
Therapia, December 8, 1877.

MEHEMET ALI PASHA'S army is so much in need of officers that it runs very serious danger of being entirely cut off by Russians, who would thus be able to occupy Sofia at once. What with Servian invasion and a movement on the part of Greece, the state of affairs would then be most critical, as I am assured, on good authority that for some time to come more than 10,000 men could not be ready for defence of Adrianople.

No. 74.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(Telegraphic.)
St. Petersburgh, December 8, 1877.

OFFICIAL telegram, dated Bogot, Friday, December 7, say:—

"Results of battle at Elena, on 4th instant, more disastrous for us than at first

* *Sic*: query Suleiman.

reported. We have 50 officers and 1,800 men killed and wounded, 11 cannons lost, 4 dismounted, and 7 taken by enemy. Further details wanting.

"Turkish force before Stataritza estimated at 10,000, those before Yakovitza 40,000. Combat at Yakovitza renewed this morning at 2 A.M., but ceased at 4."

No. 75.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, December 8, 1877, 7 P.M.

(Telegraphic.) WITH reference to blockade of Albanian coast, please ascertain and report whether whole line of coast blockaded is in possession of insurrectionary or hostile force.

No. 76.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 9.*)

(No. 525.) *Constantinople, December 8, 1877.*

(Telegraphic.) GRAND VIZIER informs me that, with a view to providing for the defence of its frontier, in the present hostile attitude assumed by Servia, Porte had taken measures for raising a large irregular Albanian force, which now amounts to 40,000 Ghegas, half of whom were provided with Martini rifles.

The Governor of Albania now telegraphs that it will be difficult to prevent these irregulars from marching to Servian frontier. Porte will discuss this matter in a Council of Ministers to-morrow, and means to call upon Servian Government to withdraw its forces from the Turco-Servian frontier, failing which the Turkish Government will cause the invasion of Servia by its Albanian irregulars, holding the Servian Government responsible for the consequences of this step.

Grand Vizier informs me that Russia has given assurances to Austrian Government that she will not make peace directly with Turkey without consulting Austria.

No. 77.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 10.*)

(No. 139.) *Tiflis, November 29, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN the "Mesbuik" (local paper) of the 24th instant appeared a report on the number and condition of the Turkish Armenians who came to this country with General Terkugasoff's column some time ago. From this document, which is written by a M. Khatisov, a member of the Committee appointed to superintend the settlement of these people in Russian territory, it would appear that the total number of Christian families which came on that occasion from Turkey was 850. The following are the names of the villages from which the emigration took place, viz., Alashkir district: Zendekan, Madzra, Chilkani, Agni Tépé, Ashalu, Hadji Safor, Karakilissa, Muradshan, Chanuria, Irizaget, Eudshulu, Chadir Maugasur, Kup Kran, Ziro, and Sofiano; and from the district of Bajazet: Boti, Kunuh Pudshiak, Karabazar, Djudshan, Saribeg, Mukuun, Muriskan Korun, and Arzab. Most of these villages are on the main road leading from Bajazet in the direction of Erzeroum.

It is difficult to obtain any very reliable information as regards the numbers of the individuals forming the 850 families above mentioned. The writer in the "Mesbuik" gives the average of 500 families at 8 persons each, but of the others he says nothing. If, however, we take the general average at 5 persons, we have a total of 4,250.

These families have now been distributed according to this amount as follows:—In the district of—

	Families.
Surmalu	23
Echmiadzin	970
New Bajazet	150
Gukcha	700
Erivan	87
Alexandropol	120
Total	1,050

As regards their present condition he states that a large portion of them suffer from sickness, especially fever, and are unable to work; that also in many places there is no work to be found so as to occupy these people; that the price of bread being very high and the hay crops having been a failure, it cannot be expected that they will be able to be maintained for any length of time at the expense of the inhabitants on whom they are at present so to say quartered; he recommends, therefore, that the Government should furnish each family with a certain quantity of seed and flour from the Government stores.

He further states that the Alashkir people are far better off than those that came from the district of Bajazet, many of the former having in their possession numbers of sheep and buffaloes, the latter, who were robbed by the Kurds, having little or nothing and requiring to be supplied even with articles of clothing.

The sum of 24,685 roubles having been collected at Tiflis, it is to be supposed that the wants of these people will not be altogether unattended to.

Among other things, the writer in question remarks that some of these emigrants expressed to him a wish to return at once to Karakilissa; others said they only desired to return in the event of Turkish Armenia being occupied by Russia.

In forming our opinion on such a statement, it must be borne in mind that nothing is inserted in a Russian newspaper which has not been first subjected to a rigid censure.

In reference to the Christian population of Bajazet, it is worthy of notice that out of a population of 216 Armenian families, 80 have emigrated to this country, and 136 are now residing at Maku and Kanthum, in Persia.

In addition to the Christian emigrants there were also a number of Yezids (devil worshippers). Whether these latter were driven away by force, or whether they came voluntarily, it is impossible to say; but one can hardly suppose that they abandoned their homes through choice.

The numbers of these are given at from 100 to 400 families. Taking them at 250, the total number of emigrants would be 1,100 families, or from 5,500 to 6,600 individuals.

Should I obtain any further information on this subject I will communicate it to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 78.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 10.*)

(No. 56.) *Tunis, December 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Russian Consul has waited upon the Bey to inform him that, as His Majesty the Emperor considers that the Principality of Tunis, by sending a contingent of troops to Turkey, has placed itself on the footing of a province of a Power with which Russia is at war, he has been instructed by the Imperial Government to cease his functions as Russian Consul accredited to His Highness.

In expressing his regret that circumstances should have arisen to necessitate the interruption of his friendly relations with Russia, the Bey said that, as a vassal Prince, he was called upon to fulfil his obligations towards his Suzerain, upon the due performance of which depended the rights which he enjoyed. He nevertheless trusted that the Emperor would be pleased to consider the duties which his position imposes upon him, and to continue to entertain for him the same friendly feelings as heretofore.

The Russian interests in the Regency have been placed under the protection of Germany.

M. Nyssen, the Russian Consul, being likewise Consul for Holland, will remain in Tunis in his latter capacity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

Inclosure in No. 78.

M. Nyssen to Mr. Wood.

Tunis, le 3 Décembre, 1877.

Monsieur et cher Collègue,

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté l'Empereur de Russie, mon auguste Maître, considérant que la Principauté de Tunis, par l'envoi d'un contingent de troupes à Constantinople, s'est placée sur le pied d'une province dépendante de la Turquie avec laquelle la Russie est en guerre, par ordre du Gouvernement Impérial, j'ai cessé aujourd'hui mes fonctions comme Consul de Russie pour lesquelles j'étais accrédité auprès de Son Altesse le Bey.

En portant ce fait à votre connaissance, je m'empresse aussi de vous dire que le Gouvernement Impérial fera ultérieurement connaître la Puissance à laquelle les intérêts Russes à Tunis seront confiés.

Je saisis cette occasion pour vous remercier des bonnes relations que vous avez bien voulu entretenir toujours avec moi, et pour vous prier, &c.

Le Consul de Russie,
(Signé) CH. NYSSEN.

No. 79.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 872.)

Vienna, December 7, 1877.

My Lord,

AT a meeting yesterday of the Budget Committee of the Austrian Delegation, at which Count Andrassy was present, some conversation took place with reference to an intended proposal of the Government that a provisional arrangement should be made for the common expenses of the Monarchy, and the consideration of the Estimates for 1878 postponed until next year, in which his Excellency's policy was criticized as nebulous and objectless; and it was contended that, while the influence of Austria-Hungary in Roumania has been entirely lost, it is not to be expected that she can have much weight in settling the future conditions of peace if she has not even been able to prevent Servia and Montenegro from taking part in the war.

Count Andrassy maintained, in reply, that his policy had been clearly understood in Europe, and has been in harmony with that of the other Powers; that the influence of Austria has been exercised in the Oriental question, but merely with a view to the maintenance of Austrian interests, and that he had given no assurance that Servia and Montenegro would not take part in the war.

Dr. Giskra having then observed that it was a matter of entire indifference to the Delegation whether his Excellency's policy has given satisfaction or not to the other Powers, and that until it was clearly explained to the Delegation themselves, he must still designate it as nebulous, Count Andrassy said that it was better for his policy to be thought nebulous than that, by premature disclosures, the interests of the country should be injured.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 80.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 406.)

Rome, December 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a report from the "Italie" of a question addressed in the Chamber of Deputies yesterday to the Minister for Foreign Affairs relative to the seizure by the Ottoman authorities of two Italian vessels, the "Britannia" and the "Matilde Bellagamba," in the Bosphorus, after they had evaded the blockade, and of the reply given by Signor Melegari.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 81.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 671.)

St. Petersburgh, December 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THE speech addressed by your Lordship to the deputation which waited on you at the Foreign Office has produced a very favourable impression in all circles here, and has very much relieved the public mind of certain apprehensions entertained in regard to the future action of England. The effect of this has been to render the tone of the Russian press somewhat more conciliatory, although it has in no way abated the extravagance of its views in regard to the conditions of peace.

I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship the précis of articles from the "Golos" of November $\frac{17}{29}$ by Mr. Egerton, on the effect of your Lordship's speech, and on the future conditions of peace, among which I observe that for the first time a sum of one milliard of roubles—about 100,000,000*l.* sterling—is claimed from Turkey as a war indemnity.

I also annex a précis from the same journal by Mr. Michell—likewise referring to the conditions of peace—among which is strongly urged the necessity of dismantling all the Turkish fortresses on the Danube, and of depriving Turkey of the right of keeping any garrisons whatever in the surrounding provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

Précis of two Articles in the "Golos" of November $\frac{17}{29}$, 1877.

THE first, with reference to the Earl of Derby's speech of November 28, considers the declaration of Her Britannic Majesty's Foreign Secretary most satisfactory to Russia, as proving the inability of the English Government to take any action with her fleet in the present question contrary to the interests of Russia; notwithstanding the evident proofs given in Lord Derby's speech of secret and abortive attempts having been made by Her Majesty's Government to obtain permission for the British fleet to enter the Bosphorus.

The second insists on the future peace being one which will recompense Russia for her sacrifices and settle once and for all the Eastern question.

Russia does not seek for conquest, but she must not be contented with a temporary peace. The condition of Europe is favourable to her now, which may not be the case later. At present England alone is against her, and even England has insisted that the condition of the Christians in Turkey requires change, and thus England cannot take up arms in behalf of the Turkish system.

The "Golos" therefore believes that the Porte will be compelled after fresh defeats to grant freedom to Bulgaria, Bosnia, and the Herzegovina; and on Russia's shoulders will fall the task of organizing Bulgaria. As for Bosnia and Herzegovina the organization of these two provinces, if Servia and Montenegro be not too weak and exhausted after their long struggle to undertake the duty, should devolve upon Servia and Montenegro.

Russia must not restore either Kars or Ardahan, and must also acquire Batoum.

As for the Dardanelles, the free passage through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus of the ships of war of all nations will give England fresh means of "intrigue" against Russia, and power of action on the southern coasts of Russia which might especially be dangerous on the Circassian coasts. On the other hand, the present closing of the Straits is not favourable to Russia. The "Golos," therefore, does not pronounce on this question, but will recur to this difficulty in a subsequent article.

Turkey must also find means for a war contribution of a milliard of roubles.

The Russian people must gain the objects for which it commenced the war.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

Précis of Article in the "Golos" of $\frac{\text{November 12}}{\text{December 10}}$ *1877.*

CONDITIONS OF PEACE WITH TURKEY.—The "Golos" of $\frac{\text{November 29}}{\text{December 10}}$, 1877, returns again in a leading article to a consideration of possible conditions of peace with Turkey. The "Golos" considers that the great problem for solution by Russia consists in securing a lasting peace for herself, and in placing the Turkish Christians in a position the most favourable for their national development. All this the "Golos" considers is unattainable as long as the Turks possess military strongholds at Rustchuk, Shumla, Widdin, Nikopol, Silistria, &c. It consequently maintains the necessity of razing these fortresses, and of depriving the Turks of the right of keeping any garrisons whatever in the surrounding provinces.

No. 82.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 10.)

(Telegraphic.) *Poradim, December 9, 1877.*
(Confidential.)

GENERAL IGNATIEW told me positively but confidentially that Kars will be annexed.

This would be in direct contradiction to the Memorandum I took to London.

Weather cold and snowy.

No. 83.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 526.) *Therapia, December 10, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my previous telegram it was decided in Council of Ministers yesterday not to address demand to Servian Government yet; but Servian Agent has been requested to-day to ask for explanations of his Government with reference to occupation of certain islands in Drino by Servian troops; if these explanations are not satisfactory Porte will consider ulterior steps. Servian Agent has again to-day communicated pacific assurances to Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 84.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.[*]

Foreign Office, December 10, 1877, 5·15 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

INSTRUCTIONS have been sent to the Commander-in-chief on the Mediterranean Station to station a gun-boat between Corfu and Antivari during the present state of affairs on the Albanian coast.

No. 85.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 35.) *Foreign Office, December 10, 1877.*
Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 118 of the 17th ultimo, reporting the arrival from Tizana of some 300 volunteers, among whom were a certain number of Christians; and I have to inform you that I approve the steps you propose to take in case of need on behalf of the latter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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[*] Similar telegrams were sent to Sir C. Schright, Consul Kirby Green, and Consul St. John.

No. 86.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 35.) *Foreign Office, December 10, 1877.*
Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 124 of the 22nd ultimo, respecting the wish of the Turkish Commander-in-chief to ascertain the conditions upon which the Prince of Montenegro would consent to enter upon negotiations for peace, and his proposal that you should pay a visit to the Montenegrin head-quarters with this object in view, and I have to inform you that your conduct in this matter is approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 87.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 19. Political. Confidential.) *Ragusa, November 30, 1877.*
My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 18, Political, of this day's date, I mentioned to your Lordship that I had received a letter from M. Duby, Private Secretary to the Prince of Montenegro: and at the same time I referred to that part of his letter where he informs me of the steps that have been taken for the recovery of goods belonging to the Stafford House Committee, addressed to Mr. Slade, at Scutari, seized at Antivari by the Montenegrins.

I now have the honour to draw your Lordship's attention to another part of M. Duby's letter, which formed the subject of my telegram of the 28th instant, referring to an application made by Mr. Green, Her Majesty's Consul at Scutari, to be allowed to go to head-quarters and see the Prince.

M. Duby says that His Highness, in reply, "expressed his willingness to meet Mr. Green, but with a desire to defer the pleasure till things were a little more settled, so that he could make an appointment with some certainty that he should be able to keep it."

M. Duby adds, that "he cannot suppose Mr. Green to be the bearer of a message from Her Majesty's Government; as to a message from the Turks, he had better not bring any more."

From the tenour of the letter, it is obvious that the Prince, who is under the control of M. Jonin, my Russian colleague, is not disposed to treat with Turkey as long as the present war continues; and that, having now entirely his own way in Albania, he finds it a more profitable employment for himself, as well as his starving subjects, to continue hostilities.

Though M. Duby's communication to me is a private one, I am not bound to secrecy; and I therefore consider it my duty to impart its contents to your Lordship, especially as it was evidently written with that object.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 88.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 407.) *Rome, December 8, 1877.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 406 of yesterday's date, inclosing a report of a question addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the Chamber of Deputies, and of his Excellency's reply, relative to the seizure of two Italian ships by the Ottoman authorities in the Bosphorus, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, in an interview which I have just had with Signor Melegari, I asked his Excellency what was the present position of this affair.

I understood from Signor Melegari that, as no declaration of the grounds of seizure had as yet been communicated to the Italian Legation, or any formal demand for protection addressed to the Italian Minister by the captains, the Italian Government had not been in a position to address a protest to the Turkish Government respecting the seizure. His Excellency said that he had sent his speech to Count Corti, in order that he might be able

to explain to the Government of the Sultan the views entertained by the Italian Government on the point of the legality, and he was glad to think, from reports which had reached him, that there was a disposition in other quarters to share those views.

His Excellency read to me a telegram from General Menabrea, in which his Excellency states that he had brought the question before your Lordship, but that you had expressed your inability to answer it off-hand; and General Menabrea says, therefore, he is to see your Lordship again on the subject. The same telegram announces that the German and Russian Ambassadors, whom General Menabrea met at the Foreign Office, had agreed in the opinion of the Italian Government, that the seizure could not be legally made in the Bosphorus, which was not under blockade, and had been declared open to the ships of all nations by the Treaty of 1856, while the Turkish Ambassador sustained the contrary doctrine, unless it should be admitted that Russia could not legally establish a blockade at the entrance of the Dardanelles. Some of the Representatives, too, at Constantinople, Signor Melegari said, considered the seizure illegal.

It would seem, further, from what Signor Melegari told me, that the cargoes of the two ships had been sold to the same Greek merchants at Constantinople, who had managed to get their own vessels through the blockade, which had been a subject of remonstrance on the part of the Italian and Her Majesty's Government; and his Excellency appeared to think that the reason why the captains had not yet made a formal demand for protection to their Legation was, that they relied upon these merchants to get these ships also through their difficulties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 89.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

Poradin, December 10, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
AFTER an unsuccessful attempt to break through investing lines, Osman capitulated unconditionally this afternoon. Osman wounded. Details later.

No. 90.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

St Petersburgh, December 10, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
I HAVE just learnt unofficially that Plevna has fallen; that Osman Pasha capitulated to-day at 6 P.M.; terms not known.

No. 91.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 526.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
WITH reference to my previous telegram, it was decided in Council of Ministers yesterday not to address demand to Servian Government yet, but Servian Agent has been requested to-day to ask for explanations of his Government with reference to occupation of certain islands in Drina by Servian troops; if these explanations are not satisfactory, Porte will consider ulterior steps. Servian Agent has again to-day communicated pacific assurances to Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No. 92.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 527. Secret.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
I WAS asked to-day whether I thought the Porte could propose an armistice. The only reply that I could give was that I did not believe that Russia would consent to an

armistice which would enable Porte to relieve Plevna. German Ambassador is still endeavouring to prevail upon Turkish Ministers to come to a direct understanding with Russia.

Judging from language of Grand Vizier and Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, they would be inclined, if they saw no hope of assistance from England, to cede to demand from Russia to open the Dardanelles to her fleet.

No. 93.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 528.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1877.
I AM asked if Her Majesty's Government can give any kind of assurance that Greece will not take hostile steps against Turkey so as to permit Porte to withdraw troops from Greek frontier, which are urgently required elsewhere.

No. 94.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 529.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1877.
I AM informed that Count Zichy has also received instructions to state to the Porte that Austria will not recognize blockade in the Black Sea. Has your Lordship been able to consult with Italian Government with reference to arrangement proposed in my despatch No. 115.

No. 95.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 530.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1877.
FOLLOWING from Zohrab, dated yesterday:—

"An attempt made four days ago by a Russian column with four guns to cross from Passin to Olti valley was frustrated by the deep snow and the cold. The state of the country has also prevented advance on Van. Russians remain at Mousson. Snow deep here; cold severe."

No. 96.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 531.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, December 10, 1877.
PORTE has (to-day?) officially informed me that blockade of Albanian coast has been extended as far as Durazzo.

With reference to your telegram of 8th instant, Porte states that the Montenegrins occupy various points on blockaded coast near Antivari, but has not exact information as to what other places are in their possession.

No. 97.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(No. 532.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, December 11, 1877.
MEHEMET ALI PASHA has been recalled and replaced by Chakir Pasha. He is accused of having unnecessarily abandoned Orkanié and the large stores of ammunition and provisions there.

No. 98.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 11.)

(No. 533.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 11, 1877.

TURKISH Minister at Athens telegraphs that one band of Cretans has left Greece for Crete, and another band with 400 rifles are about to follow with the object of causing an insurrection in the island. Information has been also received that a Greek vessel has succeeded in landing arms near Cassandra, in the Gulf of Salonica, and afterwards escaping from Turkish authorities.

No. 99.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 11.)

(No. 534.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 11, 1877.

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from General Kemball, dated Furna Toouru (*sic*) yesterday:—

"Situation still unaltered, but Russians supposed to be at Boz Kalu bringing up heavy guns. Proclamation introduced into town inviting surrender, under threat of bombardment and severe treatment when captured."

No. 100.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Adrianople, December* 11, 1877.

SNOWED here yesterday, and at intervals on Balkans since 9th instant.

There are no signs of abatement of bad weather.

No. 101.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 11.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, December* 11, 1877.

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW informs me that at 7 A.M. on the 10th Osman Pasha attempted a serious attack, probably with the desire to get out of Plevna; the attack was executed with such persistence and energy that at one time Turks penetrated the Russian lines; after five hours' combat Turks were completely beaten and surrounded.

The whole army and position fell into the hands of the Russians. Osman Pasha is wounded. Russian losses not exactly known, but, considering the gravity of the conflict, are not supposed to be excessive.

No. 102.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 73. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, December* 1, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 68 of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, during an excursion which I have just made with Captain Clarke, R.A., to the district of Apokorona, I met with two influential Chiefs, to whom I pointed out the propriety of the Christians sending delegates to Constantinople. One of these Chiefs, named Gogonis, is employed as Mouvin (Deputy Kaimakam) in the sub-district of Kissamos, and was accidentally visiting his home in the neighbourhood. He said that it was no easy matter to persuade his countrymen to adopt the course I advised, as they were very distrustful of the promises of the Porte, and even the delegates themselves might be unwilling to risk their persons at Constantinople. He would, nevertheless, spare no pains to persuade the people to elect delegates; and, inasmuch as it was a measure

recommended by the English Government, he was not without hope of the result. I told the Chief that, the fact of Her Majesty's Government recommending the measure was in itself a sufficient guarantee that the persons of the delegates would be absolutely safe, and that the Grand Vizier had assured his Excellency the British Ambassador that the Porte was anxious to satisfy the demands of the Christians; and I added that, even in the event of failure, they had nothing to lose in taking the proposed step.

On the following day, while paying a visit to Nikolaki Sartinski Pasha, the Mutessarif of Sphakia, at his head-quarters in Apokorona, the well-known Chief Kostoros Veludakis, hearing of my arrival, came to see me. To him I recommended the same measure as I had already done to Gogonis; but the wary old man expressed himself less hopefully than did his brother chief of the willingness of the Christians to elect the required deputies. He was ready, however, as the British Government was in favour of the measure, to advise his countrymen to adopt it, but he reminded me that the want of confidence of the people in Turkish promises formed an almost insuperable barrier to success, instancing the granting of the Organic Law of Crete, which had remained a dead letter. On the whole, my interview with him made me less sanguine of succeeding in my object than did that with Gogonis, and Nikolaki Pasha rather confirmed my fears. It is important to bear in mind that in dealing with Cretan Chiefs implicit reliance cannot be placed on their statements, which are dictated rather by motives of expediency than by a simple regard for truth. Now though Gogonis expressed himself as hopeful of success in the mission he has undertaken, it does not follow that he really is hopeful, nor can I be sure that the venerable old Chief Kostaros has not already committed himself to a course of hostility to his Government, should a favourable opportunity present itself. The support of Her Majesty's Government is so much valued by the Cretans that no Chief would openly declare himself as opposed to a policy recommended by that Government, however disinclined he might feel to promote it. On parting with Kostaros, the old man told me pointedly that if Crete could be formed into a Principality under Ottoman suzerainty with privileges fairly apportioned between the two communities, Europe would hear no more of their desire of annexation to Greece; and from what I have learned from many others I believe this statement to represent the general feeling.

To many persons of less note I have been recommending the dispatch of delegates to the Porte, and time only can show what chance the recommendation has of acceptance with the Committee and the Christians generally.

On my return to Canea I lost no time in communicating to the Vali what I had done, and his Excellency expressed himself as well satisfied.

I beg to add that if the Porte could be induced to allow the ex-Deputy Christoforo Argyraki to return to Crete (for I hear he is still in Constantinople), his presence would tend to dissipate much of the distrust which now so injuriously affects the public mind, besides promoting the success of the particular step now in view.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 103.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 76. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, December* 3, 1877.

NEWS was received here a few days ago of the landing at a village called Rogdia, a few miles to the west of Candia, of a Cretan Chief named Kokinaki with a party of about a dozen men. Kokinaki was a leader of influence during the last insurrection, and in the interval has been living in Greece. He belongs to the district of Mirambelli, in the east of the island, and it is supposed that he has come over with the cognizance of the Committee in Athens for the purpose of beginning hostilities against the Government. But although he has now been more than ten days in Crete, he has not been able to gather round him more than fifty men, if that number be not exaggerated, and it does not appear that they have taken to lawless courses. As there is another Chief of considerable influence in that district who is known to be opposed to any precipitate movement, and is no friend to Kokinaki, it is thought that the new comer, if bent on a course of agitation, will fail in his purpose, especially as that part of Crete was always slow to respond to revolutionary appeals. There would be much more danger of a serious issue were any band of adventurers to land in this neighbourhood, and rumours are not wanting that some are already contemplating a descent. It is certain that a discussion of some moment

is at present engaging the attention of the Committee, as they have summoned persons of note from different parts of the island to meet them in Kallikrati, a fastness in Sphakia, and it is known that they carry on a brisk correspondence with the Committee in Athens. These meetings are conducted with so much secrecy that it is seldom possible to know the results or even the subjects of their deliberations with tolerable certainty. The fall of Kars and the expected fall of Plevna are the immediate exciting causes of the increased activity of the Committee.

The general condition of the island remains pretty much as it was. The anarchy which I spoke of as prevailing regards chiefly the relations of the authorities with the lawless part of the population who are a small minority, and who now enjoy impunity for their misdeeds, as even near the towns the police are seldom able to arrest an offender. In other respects there is little to make it suspected that there is anything unusual agitating the public mind, but the apparent calm may at any time be disturbed when it suits the convenience of the Committee.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 104.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 59.)
My Lord, *Tunis, December 5*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, herewith inclosed, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, on the subject of the Porte's demand for increasing the numerical strength of the contingent of troops which the Bey intends to send to Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

Inclosure in No. 104.

Mr. Wood to Mr. Layard.

Tunis, December 5, 1877.

Sir,

IT having come to my knowledge from a reliable source that, by way of reply to the Bey's announcement to the Ottoman Government of his intention to send to the seat of war about 4,000 picked Nizam, he has received a pressing summons to considerably increase the number of his contingent, I have deemed it expedient to use my best endeavours to ascertain in such a manner as would attract the least possible attention, how far the Regent was in a position to comply with this fresh demand upon his military resources.

Putting altogether aside the present very unsatisfactory state of the finances of the Regency, the other difficulties which His Highness has to overcome are worthy of the most serious consideration.

It cannot be concealed that the resolution of the Bey to fulfil his obligation towards the Porte has given umbrage to France, and very possibly to other Governments; and that as a natural consequence of this displeasure, pressure, even amounting to threats, has been brought to bear upon him, to deter him, if possible, from an actual compliance with his promises.

Interested parties are never wanting to foment disturbances on the frontiers, and a conscription (always distasteful to the Arab tribes) would probably give a reality to these disturbances and increase their proportion. The Government would find itself powerless to suppress revolts of this kind in the absence of regular troops; and they would be put forward as an excuse for armed intervention, on the plea of preventing the extension of these disorders to Algeria.

Besides this fact, we are in the actual presence of a two years' drought. The Arabs are wandering from place to place in search of subsistence for themselves and pasture for their cattle; and the adult males would naturally resist an attempt to separate them from their families, for the very existence of which their presence at the present crisis is absolutely necessary.

The Government is honestly doing its utmost to maintain tranquillity, to counteract intrigue, and to obviate even the shadow of an excuse for foreign intervention, and at the same time is endeavouring to induce its subjects to voluntarily enlist in defence of the

Caliphate, although the results of its efforts, up to the present time, would not warrant a public appeal to the Mussulman population.

Under these circumstances it is apparent that the Regent will have no ordinary difficulty to encounter in order to comply with the Porte's demand to augment the promised contingent of some 10,000 or 15,000 men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 105.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 992. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Paris, December* 11, 1877.

THE Marquis de Banneville spoke to me this afternoon of the Eastern Question. He said that the fall of Plevna, the news of which had just arrived, might bring matters to an immediate crisis, for which it behoved all Governments to be prepared.

He had, he told me, had some conversation with Prince Orloff, the Russian Ambassador, on the question of direct negotiations for peace between the Porte and the Government of Russia. The subject had, however, been treated in vague and general terms. Prince Orloff had on his side represented that the intervention of other Powers would give rise to long and difficult discussions, which might greatly retard the conclusion of peace. On the other hand, M. de Banneville himself had rejoined that the questions to be decided affected the interests of other nations besides Russia and Turkey so seriously that a Treaty on the terms of which all the Powers interested had not been consulted could hardly effect a real and lasting pacification. There were Powers which could hardly acquiesce in being simply summoned to register the terms of a Treaty about which they had not been consulted.

M. de Banneville proceeded to say that the situation of France, independently of the present internal crisis, rendered great prudence and reserve on her part necessary. Nor could he forget that he was speaking at a moment at which great uncertainty prevailed as to the future Government of the country—at which, at all events, there was only a provisional Ministry in office. Still he was anxious to say to me that, within the narrow limits within which the action of France must be confined, he was disposed to support the interests of Great Britain in the settlement of the Eastern Question. These interests were, he thought, the general interests. I should always, he said, find him ready to give a cordial reception to any communication which Her Majesty's Government might make to him on the subject.

I may observe that the overture thus made by M. de Banneville went beyond any offer of co-operation which was made during the four years he was in office by the Duc Decazes, who never seemed to contemplate seriously the possibility of any opposition to Russia. On the other hand, I am bound to note that M. de Banneville dwelt strongly on the caution and reserve which the peculiar position of France with regard to Germany imposed upon her, and was careful not to suggest the idea that the French Government could risk a quarrel with Germany in support of its own interests or those of England in the Levant. He seemed, indeed, to consider that, at bottom, the interests of France and England were identical, but he did not shake in my mind the belief that England must depend for the protection of those interests on herself alone.

It will no doubt have struck your Lordship that M. de Banneville spoke as if he expected to remain some time longer in office; and, in fact, he was one of the three Ministers whom Marshal MacMahon persisted in retaining independently of Parliamentary exigencies. He told me, indeed, that he expected the new Ministry to be appointed this evening; but if this be so, it must, I fear, be what is called a Ministry of resistance that is in contemplation, and it is difficult to conceive how such a Ministry can be kept in office without an absolute violation of the law and Constitution.

Thus there is too much reason to dread that France may be lapsing into a revolutionary state, and that her foreign policy may, in consequence, be beyond the scope of all ordinary calculations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 106.

The Law Officers of the Crown and Dr. Deane to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

Temple, December 12, 1877.

My Lord,

WE were honoured with your Lordship's commands signified in Lord Tenterden's letter of the 5th September instant, stating that he was directed by your Lordship to transmit to us the accompanying telegram, received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, referring to the seizure in the Bosphorus—for alleged breach of blockade—of two Greek vessels, chartered by Italians, and the release of which it was reported that the Italian Government had demanded for the reasons stated in the telegram.

That the accompanying letter from M. Petrococchino contained further particulars respecting that case.

That Lord Tenterden was further to transmit to us the draft of a Memorandum which your Lordship proposed to communicate unofficially to the Italian Ambassador at this Court, as your Lordship thought it might be desirable that the Italian Government should be informed of the views of Her Majesty's Government on the case.

That before, however, communicating that Memorandum to General Menabrea, your Lordship would be glad to be informed whether we concurred in the statements as to the law of blockade therein contained, and to be favoured with any observations we might desire to offer on the subject of the proposed communication.

In obedience to your Lordship's commands we have the honour to report—

That the statements in the Memorandum as to the law of blockade are, in our opinion, accurate.

But we suggest for your Lordship's consideration that the passage in the Memorandum on page 3, beginning with the words "as to which the Neutral Powers," and ending on page 4 with the words "this important question," might conveniently be modified as follows:—

"Hitherto the Porte has been pressed by the foreign Representatives to take such measures as would increase the efficiency of the blockade which was thus recognized as existing, and Her Majesty's Government is not, with the information at present before it, prepared to say that the fact that the two Greek vessels in question got out of a port said to be blockaded, is a sufficient proof of the inefficiency, and therefore justifies Her Majesty's Government in impugning the validity of the blockade."

We have, &c.

(Signed) JOHN HOLKER.
HARDINGE S. GIFFARD.
J. PARKER DEANE.

No. 107.

Mr Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(No. 535, Secret.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, December 11, 1877.

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that it is proposed to make an appeal at once to the Powers parties to the Treaty of Paris for their intervention to put a stop to the war. He has shown me a draft of this appeal, which is moderate in language, not in any way offensive to Russia, and renews the promises of the Porte to give guarantees for the carrying out of the Constitution. It makes no mention of the conditions of peace.

Would you let me know as soon as possible whether, in your opinion, there would be any objection to this course, as the appeal will probably be settled to-morrow morning with the Sultan, and will be sent off at once, but I might stop it if I hear from you in time.

I am inclined to think that, in the event of this appeal being discouraged, a request for an armistice may be made to Russian head-quarters, and direct communications for peace opened with the Emperor. This is very secret, and I am not authorized to state it to you.

No. 108.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(Telegraphic.)

Belgrade, December 12, 1877.

IT is expected at Belgrade that hostilities may commence any day, as almost entire Servian force is available for action.

In a few localities mutinous resignations of militiamen occurred, with loss of life occasioned by their unwillingness to march.

Intelligence of surrender of Plevna received yesterday produced considerable excitement here, but the joy is somewhat mixed with uneasiness lest Russian Government should conclude peace without giving Servia an opportunity.

No. 109.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)

Foreign Office, December 12, 1877.

IN answer to your telegram No. 535, Secret, received this morning, it is not desirable that you should take any steps to prevent the appeal of the Porte being addressed to the Powers. The proceeding appears a wise one; but all will depend on the conditions of peace.

No. 110.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 431.)

Foreign Office, December 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* conveying a request from the Grand Vizier that Her Majesty's Government should intercede with the Russian Government with a view to obtain permission for certain families, which have been removed from Turkish territory in Armenia, to return to their villages, and I have to request that you will bring this matter to the notice of the Russian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 111.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 13.)

(No. 159.)

Tehran, October 23, 1877.

My Lord,

DIRECT communication with Constantinople being temporarily interrupted, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship the following information for communication to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte:—

The Persian military camp at Khoi is in process of re-establishment, in order that the local authorities may be enabled to inflict punishment upon the Persian Kurds of the Shekak tribe, who have lately committed outrages upon Mahommedans, as well as Christians, within Persian territory.

The Government of the Shah are most anxious that no asylum may be given by the Turks to this tribe of Persian Kurds, who have perpetrated acts of murder and pillage, for which they are now receiving punishment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

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* No.

No. 112.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 161.)
Tehran, October 26, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 154 of the 3rd October, on the subject of the exportation of provisions from Azerzbaijan for the Turkish and Russian armies in Armenia, I have the honour to transmit herewith translation of a communication addressed by the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the authorities at Tabreez, stating that the Persian Government consider the export of grain to the belligeren States to be an infringement of the neutrality observed by Persia in the present war, and notifying accordingly that the exportation of wheat, barley, and rice from that province to Turkey or Russia, is prohibited.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

Inclosure in No. 112.

Mirza Hossein Khan to the Deputy Governor of Azerbaijan.

October 7, 1877.

(Translation.)

FROM what is reported, grain is exported both into Russia and Turkey from the frontiers of the Khoi and at other points. I had previously written to you, and now also have to inform you again distinctly that Persia is neutral under the present circumstances, and so long as she remains so she must not help or assist either of the aforesaid Governments; and as neutrality requires that wheat, barley, and rice should in no way be exported into Russia or Turkey, you will adopt prompt measures in this case and issue stringent orders that wheat, barley, and rice are not to be exported across the Persian frontier into Turkey or Russia. If any one attempts to export (them) you will peremptorily call him to account.

No. 113.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 164.)
Tehran, October 27, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte with reference to the measures which the Persian Government are desirous should be adopted to insure the punishment of the Persian Shekak Koordish tribe who have been committing outrages in the province of Oroomiah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 113.

Mr. Taylour Thompson to Mr. Layard.

Tehran, October 27, 1877,

Sir,

THE Persian Minister has spoken to me several times on the subject of the difficulty he anticipates in consequence of the Turkish authorities on the frontier having, as it is alleged, held out promises to the Persian portion of the Shekak tribe that, in the event of their being called to account for their misdeeds by the Persian Government, they will, if they seek it, receive an asylum in Turkey.

Your Excellency will perceive from the accompanying translations of telegrams which have passed between the Persian Foreign Office and the Tabreez authorities, that the Persian Government have given orders for the punishment of Ali Agha, the Chief, and others of the tribe, who have recently committed outrages on the Mahommedan and Christian inhabitants of Persian villages near the frontier. With a view to carrying out this measure,

the camp at Khoi, which was partly broken up for the winter, has been re-formed. The Persian Government are, however, extremely anxious that the Porte should take steps to prevent their Turkish authorities from granting asylum in Turkish territory to these Koordish marauders in the event of their crossing the frontier.

At the request of the Persian Government I sent a telegram to your Excellency on this subject through the Foreign Office on the 23rd instant, and Ismail Bey has informed me that he is writing and telegraphing to his Government in the above sense, and recommending that the wishes of the Persian Government in this matter may be acceded to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 113.

The Deputy Governor of Azerbaijan to Mirza Hossein Khan.

October 1877.

(Translation.)

RESPECTING the Shekâk tribe, their misdeeds have become only too apparent. I have repeatedly represented the question to you, but have received no reply. Is there any harm in my punishing them should I have occasion to do so? because, should I leave the matter as it stands, they will do their worst, and there will be great confusion. The objection to punishing them is that Ahmed Agha, the son of Ali Khan—who has gone to the district of Albagh with 200 families, has received a decoration and a sabre, as also the Government of Albagh. If I take stringent measures, and dispatch people to punish him, he will go over to Albagh, and there the Turkish authorities will receive him with great courtesy, and we shall lose the 2,000 or 3,000 tumans which they (the Shekaks) pay. Should they not be punished, there will be continual cases of murder and plunder on the highways; more especially as ever since the affair of Albagh, and Ahmed Agha's tendency to Turkey, they refrain from making aggressions in that direction. Whenever and wherever they find an opportunity (for plunder) they do not fail to avail themselves of it. In short, if it is practicable for you to ask the Turkish Government to promise that it will not permit this tribe to remain in Turkish territory, please give me leave to punish them, or else I have to state most distinctly that you must give up all hopes for the tranquillity and order of Khoi and Oroomiah.

Inclosure 3 in No. 113.

Mirza Hossein Khan to the Deputy Governor of Azerbaijan.

October 1877.

(Translation.)

RESPECTING the Shekâks, I have discussed the matter with the British and Turkish Legations, and have telegraphed to Constantinople. A satisfactory answer will be received. Do not wait for the receipt of these replies from Constantinople and the Legations, but take measures for their punishment.

No. 114.

Consul Abbott to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 25.)
Tabreez, October 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that whilst at Tiflis last May it was reported to me, in connection with the Russian officer General Franchini, then, I believe, about to proceed to Tehran, that he would probably take the command of the Persian army in the event of Russia inducing Persia to join her against Turkey.

The Provinces of Karadagh and Karabagh, which adjoin one another, and belong respectively to Persia and Russia, are both peopled to a great extent by Shiah Mahommedans, whereas the Mussulman populations of Daghestan and Circassia are of the Soonee persuasion. It was thus supposed, in case the insurrection in the Caucasus assumed formidable dimensions, that the Russian Government contemplated using the Shiahs of Karadagh and Karabagh as instruments against the Soonees of Trans-Caucasia, and that the command of this Perso-Russian army would be confided to General Franchini, with the

twofold object of quelling rebellion in the Caucasus, and effecting a junction, in case of need, with the Russian army operating in Turkish Armenia.

Another report was that General Franchini had been sent to Tehran to further a design, attributed, amongst others, to Russia, of creating embarrassments on the frontiers of British India, by way of Asterabad, Merve, and Herat.

I communicate the above to your Lordship with great reserve; but if the tide of victory in Asia turn in favour of Russia it may be presumed that she will not be behindhand in renewing overtures to Persia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM G. ABBOTT.

No. 115.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 13.)

(No. 327. Confidential.)
Athens, December 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Hellenic Minister for Foreign Affairs has informed me that in his opinion an insurrection may break out in Crete at any moment, that he is most anxious to prevent it, and that he is therefore dissuading those Cretan Chiefs who are at present in Athens from returning to their homes.

His Excellency has also informed me that he is in possession of information which leaves but little doubt in his mind that Austria will, in certain eventualities, occupy Bosnia, and that then Italy will consider herself bound to occupy the northern part of Albania, in which case M. Tricoupi said he thought a Greek force should proceed to occupy as much of Turkish territory as possible which is inhabited by the Greek race.

In reply to my question, M. Tricoupi stated that an unofficial interchange of ideas had taken place between the Governments of Greece and Austria and Greece and Italy upon this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 116.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 13.)

(No. 328. Confidential.)
Athens, December 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to lay before your Lordship, as accurately as I can, the subject of two conversations which I have lately had with M. Tricoupi, Hellenic Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Tricoupi spoke to me in the first place with respect to Crete; he said that the Turkish Garrison having been in great part withdrawn from that island, and sent on service to Antivari and elsewhere, the occasion for an insurrectionary movement on the part of the Cretans was most favourable, and that an insurrection might consequently take place at any moment. He assured me that he and his colleagues were most anxious to prevent a rising in Crete, and that he was endeavouring to induce those Cretan Chiefs who are at present in Athens not to return to Crete, as their return would without fail promote an insurrection; but he said he had no means at his command except persuasion to prevent them from leaving Greece, which they could do at any time and unobserved. But, he added, in endeavouring to persuade the Cretans not to rebel against the Turkish Government, the Greek Government is assuming an enormous responsibility, as it was much to be feared that unless Crete was in a state of insurrection at the moment of peace being concluded, her claims for consideration would be neglected by the Great Powers, and all the blame in such an eventuality would then be thrown by Crete upon the Hellenic Government for having counselled her not to take advantage of the present opportunity, so favourable for an insurrection. Consequently, M. Tricoupi said, if Her Majesty's Government wished the Greek Government to persevere in this line of action with regard

to Crete, he thought they should give them some positive assurances that the interests of the Cretans would not be neglected; and he mentioned with reference to this policy of the Greek Government that he knew that Russia was endeavouring to excite the Cretans to revolt, and that her agents were at the same time assuring them that they were abandoned by Greece.

An insurrection in Crete would, his Excellency went on to say, at once excite a strong feeling in Greece; Greek subjects would immediately endeavour to render assistance to the Cretans, and thus Greece might find herself involved in hostilities with Turkey. His Excellency therefore expressed himself as most anxious, in the event of an insurrectionary movement taking place in Crete, that Greece should not be at once held responsible for it, or for consequences ensuing thereon, such, for instance, as the action of inhabitants of the Hellenic Kingdom, which the Government would be unable to restrain.

M. Tricoupi then spoke to me upon another subject; he said that he was in possession of information which led him to entertain but little doubt that in certain eventualities Austria would occupy Bosnia, and that then Italy would feel it incumbent upon her to occupy Northern Albania, the object of both those Powers being "to keep order" in Turkey, and that in such a case a Greek force should occupy as much as possible of the Turkish territory which is inhabited by Greeks, "not with a view to conquest, but for the purpose also of keeping order and of preventing insurrection," and he remarked that he thought Her Majesty's Government would prefer an occupation of such territory by a Greek force rather than see the outbreak there of an insurrection.

He seemed, moreover, to think that Turkey would not resent an occupation under such circumstances being carried into effect by Austria and Italy, and that she should, therefore, not resent Greece adopting a similar policy; but at the same time he expressed a fear that she would do so, and that a Turkish fleet would come and devastate the Greek coasts; but he said he trusted that Her Majesty's Government would look upon occupation of Turkish territory by a Greek force under such circumstances "as really intended to promote the interests of peace."

I asked M. Tricoupi if any understanding had been come to between Greece and Austria, and Greece and Italy, and he replied "No." "But," I continued, "has there been an interchange of ideas with those Powers on the question of occupying Turkish territory?" and he answered that whatever had passed had been treated entirely in an "indirect" and in a strictly unofficial manner. I then asked him what he meant by "indirect," and he stated, "Not by communications between members of the respective Governments in question."

I then said that the provinces of Thessaly and Epirus were quiet; to which M. Tricoupi answered that that was because the Greek Government had been doing, and was doing, all it could to prevent an insurrection.

I next remarked to M. Tricoupi that the scheme he had laid before me appeared to be one for the dismemberment of Turkey; that I had already told him that if Greece, in spite of the advice of Her Majesty's Government, became involved in hostilities with Turkey, she could hardly turn to them for protection; and I added that that language had been approved by Her Majesty's Government, and that the desire of the Government of Her Majesty the Queen was that Greece should maintain a pacific attitude.

To this M. Tricoupi replied that the Greek Government had no intention of occupying Turkish territory, unless such a step was first resorted to by the Governments of Austria and Italy.

I should also mention to your Lordship that during his conversation with me, M. Tricoupi expressed himself as desirous of entering into confidential communication with Her Majesty's Government on the policy Greece should pursue in the present crisis, as being the Government of a Power to whom Greece turned more than to any other for protection and advice.

In conclusion, I venture to make to your Lordship the following observations. I entertain much fear that the policy pursued by King George's advisers in making warlike preparations, which have entailed, and will entail for some time to come, great pecuniary sacrifices upon the country, may render it most difficult for the Hellenic Government to maintain a pacific policy. The position of His Majesty the King and of his Ministers is, I think, one of much difficulty; for, if nothing is attempted after all the measures which have been and are still being adopted for increasing the military force of the country, the King and his Government will incur great unpopularity with the party of action, and they will incur a like unpopularity with those who disapprove a war policy in the event of its being attended with failure or disastrous consequences to the country.

The Report which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 321 of the 28th

ultimo, by Captain Clarke, does certainly not speak favourably of the state of the Greek army; but still I am of opinion, and I am by no means alone in that opinion, that the Greek Government may, as a last resort, have recourse to an aggressive policy towards Turkey. They may, perhaps, not put an army in motion fully equipped, such as England would put into the field, but they may send bodies of troops simultaneously at different points across the frontiers; they may, at the same time, endeavour to arm the population of the district through which they may pass, and thus cause great embarrassment to Turkey, and present, at the same time, which they are most anxious to do, an "Hellenic Question" to Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 117.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 329. Confidential.)
Athens, December 2, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 328, Confidential, of to-day's date, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that on M. Tricoupi mentioning to me that in the event of Austria occupying Bosnia with a view of keeping order in Turkey, I asked him what object Italy could have in taking upon herself a similar duty in Northern Albania, and that his Excellency replied that if Austria entered Bosnia, Italy would wish to take possession of Northern Albania, with a view of holding it until she could obtain the cession of certain Austrian territory she coveted. I understood M. Tricoupi to refer to the Trentino as being the Austrian territory Italy wished to acquire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 118.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 330. Very Confidential.)
Athens, December 2, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the passage in my despatch No. 328, marked Confidential, of to-day's date, in which M. Tricoupi spoke of occupying as much as possible of Turkish territory which is inhabited by Greeks, I have the honour to report to your Lordship, for the information of Her Majesty's Government, that I asked him what direction a Greek force would take in the event of such a force proceeding to enter Turkey, and that his Excellency replied that the object would be to make for Macedonia and to endeavour to establish themselves in certain fastnesses on the Rhodope Mountains, where he thought they could maintain themselves.

As M. Tricoupi has stated that Greece would not take the initiative in an occupation of Turkish territory, but that she would await a similar step on the part of Austria and Italy, I presume that the Greek Government, if it really meditates sending a force into Macedonia, anticipates that, in the event of Italy sending an expedition to Northern Albania, the Turkish fleet will be fully occupied in endeavouring to cope with the Italian fleet, and that in that case a Greek force might be sent by sea (perhaps from Chalcis, where the Government is collecting troops and guns) to Thrace, and disembarked near to where the Rhodope Mountains approach the sea; for the Greek Government can hardly, I think, entertain the idea of sending a force so far by land into Turkey with any prospect of success.

It is only in the event, however, of Turkey being much weakened, either by Russia or by the hostile action of other Powers, that Greece can hope to enter upon an aggressive policy with any chance of success; and I am inclined to think that the reason why M. Tricoupi (supposing him to be sincere) is anxious that an insurrection should not break out in Crete at present, and that he seems desirous, for the moment, of settling pacifically any differences which arise with the Porte, is that he fears Greece may become involved in hostilities with Turkey before a movement on the part of Greece can be arranged to take place simultaneously with an invasion of Turkish territory on the part of other Great

Powers besides Russia. Although M. Tricoupi has assured me that no formal understanding exists between Greece and Austria or Greece and Italy, still his language indicates I think, that he anticipates the adoption on the part of those Powers of a policy which may favour an occupation of Turkish territory by Greece, and further, that he is most anxious as to what view Her Majesty's Government will take of such a step.

As I have reported in my despatch No. 328, Confidential, I discouraged such a policy, and I moreover asked M. Tricoupi if he was quite certain that Her Majesty's Government might not object to Italy carrying out the project of which he had spoken, to which he replied that he thought England was powerful enough to prevent it, but that he did not think she would interfere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 119.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 331.)
Athens, December 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 99 of the 22nd ultimo, and to report that I have informed M. Tricoupi that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, it is premature to offer any opinion as to the assembling of a Conference; but that should one be hereafter convened, and any States not parties to the Treaty of Paris admitted to it, the claims of Greece to be represented would receive consideration.

In making this communication to M. Tricoupi, I told him that I thought he should consider this reply of your Lordship as a friendly act on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and that I hoped he would make use of it with a view to encourage a pacific policy. His Excellency thanked me, and stated that he looked upon it as a friendly communication, and that he would make use of it in the sense I had suggested.

Having been informed that Italy had returned a very favourable answer to the desire expressed by the Greek Government to be admitted to a Conference, I asked Count Maffei yesterday whether there was any truth in this report, and he said that, in the first place, Greece had not made a direct request for admittance to a Conference to his Government, and that no communication had been made through him on behalf of his Government to the Hellenic Government, but that possibly he might receive some instructions on this question by the next mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 120.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 332. Confidential.)
Athens, December 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, in compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 98, Confidential, of the 17th ultimo, I informed M. Tricoupi, at an interview which I had with him on the 30th ultimo, that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has received no complaints that the provisions of martial law has been applied to British subjects in Turkey, and that he has received positive assurances from the Porte that the law would not be enforced against foreigners.

M. Tricoupi said that he would instruct M. Gennadius to convey his thanks for this communication to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 121.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 13.)

(No. 1496.) *Constantinople, December* 3, 1877.

My Lord,

IN pursuance of the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 654 of October 30, I have endeavoured to obtain full information as to the treatment of the Jews of Kyzanlik by the Bulgarians and Russians on the occupation of that place last summer by General Gourko's forces. The inclosed sad statement, drawn up by a person who had made full inquiries on the subject, may, I think, be considered on the whole as trustworthy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—The statement I forward to your Lordship has been prepared by the Representative of the "Alliance Israelite Universelle" at Constantinople from evidence given by the Chief Rabbi of Kyzanlik, and other Jews who succeeded in escaping from that place. They are very anxious that it should not be made public that the information was given by them, as they dread the vengeance of the Bulgarians should they return to their homes.

A. H. L.

Inclosure in No. 121.

Statement regarding Treatment of Jews at Kyzanlik.

THE Russians arrived before Kyzanlik on the 18th July. The Turkish forces, amounting to about 5,500 men, of whom 1,500 were regulars and the remainder inhabitants of the town, attempted to oppose their advance, but were driven back into the town with very heavy loss. The white flag was then hoisted by the inhabitants, and a deputation, consisting of Turks, Jews, and Bulgarians, was sent to General Gourko to arrange the terms of a capitulation. The delegates were, however, unable to see the Russian General, and re-entered the town at the same time as the enemy. The Bulgarians at once seized upon the Administration, invaded the Courts of Justice, and made the Cadi prisoner. A procession was formed, each of the attendants bearing a small Russian flag, and he was conducted to the monastery. As for the Kaimakam, who had taken part in the action before the town, he was seized by the Bulgarians and treated with the utmost barbarity, his eye and teeth being torn out.

The following day permission was given by the Russian General to both Russians and Bulgarians to plunder houses belonging to Turks and Jews, and in reply to the complaints of the proprietors, who had been previously disarmed, they were informed that the pillage of a captured town for at least twenty-four hours were sanctioned by the laws of war. The Bulgarians continued their work of pillage, murder, and rape for several days.

On the 20th July, three Bulgarians, led by a person who seemed to be a Russian, broke into the house of Aaron Caneti, who hid himself. They, however, succeeded in finding his partners, Isaac and Judas Assa, and called upon them to disclose the place where Aaron Caneti kept his money. Finding resistance impossible, the Assas gave up a portion of the money, which, however, did not satisfy the Bulgarians, who stabbed to death Isaac Assa, Judas succeeding in making his escape. This outrage was at once brought to the notice of the Russian Commander, who placed sentries in the streets in order to stop the pillage and arrest marauders. But, notwithstanding this step, the Bulgarians continued their work of pillage, and the town remained in their hands for eight days. On the ninth day, news arrived that the Turks had re-occupied Zaghra, and the Russians, of whom a small force only remained at Kyzanlik, at once retired to Shipka, leaving the Turkish and Jewish families at the mercy of the Bulgarians, who from that time set no bounds to their excesses. A proclamation was issued by the Bulgarian Government to the effect that any Turk or Jew who left his house would be immediately put to death, and some Turks, who went out notwithstanding this prohibition, were killed. The object of this order was to facilitate the plunder of the shops and houses, defended, as they would be, by the proprietors alone. I was at first obeyed by the Jews, but seeing that the plunder of their houses nevertheless continued, they quitted them on the 4th August, in order to repair to the synagogue and determine what steps they should take under the circumstances.

On Saturday, the 5th August, the Bulgarians penetrated into the court of the synagogue, uttering threats of death against those who had set their orders at defiance. They were guided by a Christian named Simis, whose employment had been to light the fire on Saturdays in the synagogue, and in most of the Jewish houses in Kyzanlik. This wretch, who had lived on the bounty of the Jews, was now foremost to betray and denounce them. Some of the Jews, among whom was the Grand Rabbi, managed to escape to the garrets and cellars of their houses, where they concealed themselves, but those who remained were seized by the Bulgarians, who selected from among them, at the indication of Simis, Samuel Caneti, Jacob Levy, Moses Cutava, and Behor Joseph Levy, and conducted them to the other extremity of the town. On the way these poor men were most inhumanly maltreated by the Bulgarians, with a view to extorting money from them. Finding that they had none, they killed a dog, and, in order to revenge themselves, forced their Jewish prisoners to drink its blood. They subsequently released their prisoners, with the exception of Samuel Caneti, in order that they might take steps to ransom him. The Jews having no money, the Jewish women gave up their jewels, and the amount of the ransom was made up and handed over to the Bulgarians, who, however, did not release their prisoner.

On Saturday night the Bulgarians tried by various means to provoke a fresh conflict with the Jews. Keeping themselves out of sight, they sent a boy to fire a pistol into the Jewish houses, hoping that the Jews would resent the insult, and by chastising the boy give them an excuse for falling upon them. The Jews, however, contented themselves with giving the young rascal some money, and he then left them alone.

On Sunday the Bulgarians broke into all the Jewish houses, and searched everywhere for money.

On Monday the situation of the Jews became altogether desperate. They had lost everything, and were in momentary expectation of being put to death. The corpses of eleven victims had already lain forty-eight hours in the court of the synagogue. The names of these victims were Chabetai Beraka, his wife Coli, Behor Beraka, his son Solomon, Michael Esquinasi, David Beraka, David Hadji, Yeouda Levy, Elias Fashi, Leona, the wife of Behor Levy, and her grand-daughter Bohora.

In this extremity the Jews decided to go to Shipka and give themselves up to the Russians.

This same day (Monday) the Bulgarians broke into the house of the Grand Rabbi, laid hold of his grand-daughter Mazaltou, seventeen years old, and carried her off to the Bulgarian quarter, declaring that they would not give her up until they received a large ransom. The ransom was paid, but the girl was not sent back.

It was only by means of money that permission was obtained to bury the eleven Jews who had been murdered in the court of the synagogue, and the same means were employed to enable the survivors to leave Kyzanlik and proceed to Shipka. No sight could be imagined more distressing than this emigration *en masse* of the Jewish families, deprived of everything, penniless, almost clotheless, to escape this intolerable persecution. It was heartrending to hear the lamentations of these poor people hurrying away with their children to avoid certain death. They left Kyzanlik at about 9 o'clock Turkish. In a ditch by the wayside they discovered the body of Samuel Caneti, who had been murdered by the Bulgarians, but, being pressed for time, they had to continue their flight, leaving it unburied. At 1 o'clock at night, Turkish, the fugitives arrived near Shipka and halted until daylight.

On the following day a deputation, consisting of the Grand Rabbi and some others, went to the Russians to inform them of their arrival and make their submission. During the absence of the deputation some Cossacks appeared. They picked out seventy-two men from among the fugitives, separated them from their families, and drove them off into a ravine through which flows a stream called the Bidjendi, about two hours distant from Shipka. Here they were stripped of their clothes and of the small sum of money they still possessed, and were then formed into line preparatory to being put to the sword. They were, however, saved from death by the arrival of two Russian horsemen conveying an order to bring them back immediately. The Cossacks at once took to flight, and these seventy-two unfortunate men, naked and barefooted, were compelled to walk to Shipka, where their families had meanwhile been temporarily settled. The Russian General gave orders that the Jews should be established in the court of a church, where they were supplied with bread and water for some days.

About three days after their arrival at Shipka the grand-daughter of the Grand Rabbi was sent back by the Bulgarians. She had been dishonoured, and was in a pitiable state; nevertheless, her parents were delighted at her return.

For thirteen days and nights the Jews remained encamped in this court. At night

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the Bulgarian soldiers used to enter the court, and, with threats of death and by the faint light of candles, select those girls and young women whose appearance most pleased them, and carry them off to their houses, without regard to their cries and lamentations. At daybreak they were restored, dishonoured, to their parents. These excesses continued until the health of these miserable creatures suffered frightfully. With a refinement of cruelty the Bulgarians fastened the door of the court inhabited by the Jews, and left them twenty-four hours without water. It was fearful to hear the children, suffering from the heat of summer, and crying for water, which their parents were unable to give them.

On the 20th August this state of suffering was at its height. On that day the funeral of a Russian officer took place in the church in the court of which the Jews were confined. A large number of Russians and Bulgarians attended it, and the groans of the unhappy Jews were overheard by some Russian officers, who ordered the door of the court to be opened, and great was their astonishment at the sight of these miserable creatures dying of thirst. They ordered water to be immediately brought, stipulating only that those of the women who had infants at the breast should also suckle some Bulgarian children who had been found abandoned in the Balkans. These officers promised their protection to the Jewish sufferers, and were loud in their abuse of the Bulgarians, who had not scrupled to thus torture inoffensive persons who had submitted of their own accord. They even went so far as to procure four cows for their support.

Meanwhile it was reported that the Turkish army was approaching Shipka, and the Bulgarians were much exercised lest on the return of the Turks the Jews should be able to give them an account of the exploits of their persecutors and the cruelties these latter had perpetrated. On the other hand, one of the Russian officers, a Jew himself, was doing his utmost to save the fugitives. He managed to get them sent to Tirnova, by way of Gabrova, with an escort of Bulgarian soldiers, and a letter addressed to the authorities, stating that the Jews were not prisoners, but peaceable citizens, who had submitted of their own free will.

Unfortunately the soldiers of the escort, joined by other Bulgarians animated by the vilest intentions, proceeded to the worst excesses. They caused the Jews to march slowly so that they arrived at night before Gabrova. Once there their license had no bounds. The nocturnal scenes of Shipka recommenced, and the unhappy girls were once more violated by these wretches in the open fields and in the presence of the whole caravan.

On the 22nd August they entered Gabrova amidst the hooting and abuses of the inhabitants, who had assembled to see them pass. They were forced to march all through the town and exposed to the execration of the public, their escort giving out that they had poisoned the water at Zaglun and thereby caused the death of a great number of Russians. Owing to this atrocious calumny the people fell upon them and they were subjected to much ill-treatment. This martyrdom only ceased when they were handed over to the Russian police, and the letter read which established their innocence; and even then they were confined in a place where they were exposed on the bare ground to the burning heat of the sun by day and the wet dew by night. They were constantly watched. Their only food consisted of mouldy bread, and water was given them in just sufficient quantities to keep them alive.

On the 1st September they were sent to Dranova, where they passed the night. Some of them there fell sick. The fatigues of the march, the heat of the sun, the want of every necessary of life, the absence of any covering for the feet, all this constitued a severe trial for them.

One child died and was buried.

Leaving Dranova on the 2nd they reached Tirnova on the 3rd September, and met on the way the bulk of the Russian army. The Jewish soldiers who passed devoted all they had, both of money and rations, to their relief. At Tirnova the fugitives were lodged in the houses which had been abandoned by the Turks; and they were so fortunate as to meet a Jewish merchant, a contractor to the army, who furnished them with 600 okes of bread, and the following day obtained permission for them to go where they liked in the town. He also provided them with more bread and some money. They remained about five days at Tirnova, and during that time some of the men voluntarily employed themselves upon the earthworks, where they were protected by the Jewish soldiers in the Russian service, who continued to provide them with bread and money. Notwithstanding this protection they continued so be the victims of gross outrages. The Bulgarians during the night broke into some of the houses occupied by the Jews, endeavoured to cut off the beard of the Grand Rabbi and some others, and violated some of the women and girls. The Jewish merchant, on learning these facts, recommended them to leave at once for Bucharest, by way of Sistova, and provided them with a pass,

carriages, and provisions, and also gave them a letter of recommendation to his partner at Sistova. They lost no time in setting out, and arrived at Sistova on the 9th September. They had, however, to endure much privation on the road, and several of the children succumbed, and were buried.

They were received at Sistova with great kindness by the partner of the Jewish merchant, and were immediately conducted to the court of the Synagogue, where they were supplied with provisions and attended by a Jewish physician in the Russian service. By his advice they continued to reside in the Synagogue during their stay at Sistova, sooner than occupy the houses put at their disposal by the authorities, and where they might have been subjected to further outrages at the hands of the Bulgarians.

After remaining six days at Sistova, they set out on the 15th September in carriages for Bucharest, viâ Zimnitza, crossing the Danube by the floating bridge constructed by the Russians. Ten persons died on the road, and were buried by the Jewish community of Zimnitza. In that town they changed carriages and renewed their stock of provisions. They proceeded at once on their journey, and arrived at Bucharest on the 17th September, where they met with a most touching reception from their co-religionists, and their wants were soon supplied by the care and attention of Mr. Haïm Levy, a member of the "Société de Bienfaisance de la Communauté de Bucarest," backed up by the charitable efforts of the whole of the Jewish population of the Roumanian capital.

Thirty-five of the Kyzanlik fugitives died during their stay at Bucharest.

On the 16th October they left that town for Trieste, where they arrived in safety, having experienced nothing but kindness and attention throughout the journey.

A special steamer had been chartered by the "Jewish Alliance" to convey them from Trieste to Constantinople, where they arrived on the 8th November.

No. 122.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 1438. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 3, 1877.*

SERVER PASHA informed me this morning that owing to the threats of the Russians the Bey of Tunis was now hesitating about sending to Constantinople the contingent of troops which he was bound by his engagements with the Porte to supply. Unless, his Excellency said, he performed his duty in this respect, the Turkish Government would be under the necessity of making a peremptory demand upon him, and if he did not at once comply with it such measures as might be requisite would be taken to compel him to do so. I ventured to suggest to Server Pasha that it was very desirable not to add to the difficulties in which the Porte now found itself by having a quarrel with Tunis, which might lead, under present circumstances, to serious consequences. His Excellency said that he would act upon my advice, and would delay taking any further steps; but he begged me to ask your Lordship by telegraph whether you would kindly use your influence to arrange matters with the Bey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 123.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 1439.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December 3, 1877.*

AHMED VEFYK PASHA, owing to ill-health, and, I have reason to believe, to the vexations to which he has been exposed, has resigned his office as Vali of the Province of Adrianople. He is succeeded by Djemil Pasha, who has hitherto been Military Commandant of the city, and has been steadily intriguing against him. This appointment is generally condemned. Djemil Pasha does not bear a good character, is young and inexperienced, and is mainly responsible for the severity shown to the Bulgarians. Server Pasha, to whom I spoke on the subject, admitted at once that the Grand Vizier and himself greatly regretted that the appointment should have been made, and assured me that they had not been consulted with regard to it, and that it did not receive their sanction.

Judging from the reports that I have received from Adrianople, and from those sent to my colleagues, the administration of Ahmed Vefyk Pasha has given equal satisfaction to Christians and Mussulmans.

He has shown a lively interest in all that concerns their welfare, and has done much to relieve the sufferings of the fugitives and of the wounded soldiers. Unfortunately he was unable to control the military authorities in their harsh proceedings towards the Bulgarian prisoners, to which he was very much opposed. I trust that the Sultan will not lose his services altogether.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 134.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 1444. Secret.)

Constantinople, December 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE read with the deepest interest Lord Lyons' despatch No. 928, Secret, of the 20th ultimo, a copy of which your Lordship has been good enough to transmit to me. I venture to think that it deserves the most serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the intention generally attributed to Russia of demanding, as one of the conditions of peace, the cession of the whole, or a part, of Armenia.

This question is one which specially, if not exclusively, affects the interests of England. The Continental Powers, who may have a voice in the settlement of the terms of a peace between Turkey and Russia, appear to regard it with indifference. It will signify little to them whether Russia "rectifies her frontier," to use the cant phrase in vogue to justify spoliation, by adding to her territories an Asiatic province; but to England it may be a matter of the most vital importance. If the acquisition by Russia of Armenia, or of such part of it as may render the whole dependent upon her, is dangerous to our interests and influence in the East, it remains for us alone to take measures to prevent it. We can scarcely look for help or support, under present circumstances, to any European Power. It behoves, therefore, Her Majesty's Government to consider, ere it be too late, whether the annexation to Russia of this part of the Turkish Empire would be a danger to England of so grave a nature as to make it incumbent upon her to resist it.

The annexation by Russia of Armenia, or the eastern portion of it, may be considered from four points of view; (1st), its effect upon the Mahomedan populations of Central Asia and of India; (2nd), the facilities it would afford to Russia for further conquests in Persia and Asia-Minor; (3rd), its consequences to our direct communication with India; and (4th), its result upon British commerce.

I trust that your Lordship will permit me to submit to you a few observations upon each of these subjects. To treat them at any length, and as their importance deserves, would be to exceed the limits of a despatch.

1. As regards the effect that the annexation of so important a portion of the Asiatic territories of the Sultan, in consequence of the defeat of his arms, would have upon Mussulman opinion in Central Asia and India, I can only judge from evidence which reaches me indirectly. I cannot, therefore, speak with any confidence upon it. Your Lordship will have far better means of forming an opinion on the subject from the reports of the Indian Government, and of those who can furnish trustworthy personal knowledge. I can only judge from the information which I have been able to obtain here from such men as Yakoub Khan of Kashgar, and others, who may be considered good authorities on such matters, although they may be, at the present moment, influenced by sentiments towards both England and Russia which may perhaps bias their judgment to some extent. They are unanimously of opinion that the fall of Kars, and the conquest of Armenia, will produce a conviction of the irresistible strength of Russia, and of the inability of England to oppose her progress in the East, which will be, in the end, very dangerous to British rule in India. Such is the belief of the Turks. The Turkish newspapers are expressing it in forcible language. It will, of course, be said by those who hold opposite views, that the Turks know nothing about it, and that Turkish journalists write as they do in the hope of inciting England to help Turkey in the present war. But, making every allowance for these considerations, it cannot, I think, be doubted that the annexation of Armenia by Russia would have an effect upon Mahomedan opinion throughout Asia, which would be more or less prejudicial to the interests and influence of England, and the consequences upon our Mussulman population in India should not be disregarded.

2. It cannot be denied that the possession by Russia of Armenia, or of that part of it which contains Kars, Batoum and Van, would give Russia such advantages in any future war with Turkey, or Persia, as to place the northern provinces of the latter country, and the whole of the Turkish territory in Asia, at her mercy. I have already touched upon this subject in my despatch No. 648 of the 30th May last, but I venture to revert to it. The immense importance attached by Russia to the acquisition of Batoum affords sufficient proof of the value she attributes to its possession. It is the only port on the eastern and southern shores of the Black Sea, from the Straits of Kertch to the entrance of the Bosphorus, that can become in her hands a great naval and commercial station. Its position is equally advantageous to her for trade or war. It is a point from which roads into Georgia, Persia, and the eastern possessions of Turkey in Asia, can without difficulty be carried, and from which these countries are most accessible from the centre of Russia. It can be easily, and at once, connected with the railway between Poti and Tiflis. For purposes of war, it would be a basis of operations in direct water communication with Odessa, Sebastopol and Nicolaieff, and any naval and military station Russia may hereafter have in the Black Sea. It is within a short distance of the frontiers of the Persian province of Azerbijan. It affords ready access to Kars and the whole of Armenia. In fact, the possession of Batoum and Kars by Russia would give her the virtual command of the whole of Western Asia, and would cause a complete change in the relations which now exist between her and any other Power that may have interests, political or commercial, in that part of the world.

Even if Erzeroum and Trebizond be not ceded to Russia at the end of the present war, the possession of Batoum and Kars would enable her to seize both places whenever she thought the time opportune to do so. With Armenia in her hands she would be the virtual mistress of Asia Minor and of the vallies of the Tigris and Euphrates. Were Mukhtar Pasha's army destroyed there would be absolutely nothing to prevent the Russians marching, in Sir Arnold Kemball's opinion, even in winter, upon Erzinghiam, and onwards as far as they thought fit, were it to the shores of the Bosphorus. On the other side there is no serious impediment in their way if they chose to descend by Van, Bitlis, and Moush, or by any other road, into the low countries watered by the Euphrates and Tigris. It is true that if peace be made before Russia extends her invasion beyond the Armenian plateau, the Turks, should they even lose Armenia, might hereafter construct defences for the purpose of impeding a further Russian advance. But, in the first place, it is by no means certain that they will have the means should they have the will to do so; and, in the second, it is not probable that Russia will permit them to take really effective measures to bar her from future conquests.

The annexation by Russia of the independent States of Central Asia is justified by her, and by her partizans, on the plea of necessity. They are troublesome neighbours. They force her into war by depredations on Russian territory, by treacherous intrigues, or by violation of international engagements. However unwilling she may be to extend her frontiers in Central Asia, she has no other course open to her but to keep what she conquers. England, it is alleged, has been compelled to do the same in India. This may, or may not, be true; but surely the same justification cannot be offered for the conquests of Russia in Western Asia. Turkey has never caused her trouble, and has ever been faithful to her Treaties; Russia has absolutely nothing to fear from her. The utmost of which she may have to complain is that some lawless Kurdish tribes may occasionally have made a raid upon her territory, a crime of which Kurds under Russian rule have not been guiltless. The same may be said as regards the relations between Russia and Persia. Why, therefore, does Russia seek to acquire Turkish and Persian provinces if not for the object of carrying out ambitious designs, and of extending her power and influence in Asia?

It appears to me that those who are disposed to treat the possible advance of Russia upon India as a mere imaginary danger not worth considering, mislead public opinion in England by placing the question on a wrong issue. How can people believe, it is asked, that Russia can march an army through the inhospitable deserts of Turkestan and with hostile populations behind her, and, far removed from any basis of operations, attack powerful well-disciplined British forces on the frontiers of India? Or who can be foolish enough to think that Russia can send an army down the Tigris or Euphrates, embark it in the Persian Gulf, and land it at Kurrachee or Bombay?

The question when thus put, is no doubt easily answered. But no one who has seriously studied this matter maintains that Russia intends either to march an army direct from Orenburg or Bokhara, or to send one by sea through the Persian Gulf, for the conquest of Hindostan.

What those best acquainted with the condition of India, and the proceedings of

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Russia in Central Asia have feared, is that the gradual and calculated advance of Russia towards our frontiers by the annexation of Asiatic States, or by the establishment of a preponderating influence over them, may give rise to a state of things in India which may be dangerous to our rule, to the peace of our dominions, and to those relations which happily now exist between us and our Mohammedan subjects; that it may render it necessary for us to increase our forces to the injury of the well-being of the people; and that it may seriously weaken, not only our means of defence in India if we are attacked, but our position as a Great Power in Europe. With our experience of the manner in which Russia carries on her intrigues in neighbouring countries, and considering the effect that such intrigues would inevitably have upon our Mussulman population, it would be downright folly on our part to allow her frontiers to be conterminous with our own if we could avoid it.

But though Russia might not be able to send an army to India through Central Asia, or by sea, there is no insurmountable obstacle to her doing so through the provinces of Persia to the south of the Caspian if she possessed Batoum and Armenia. As I pointed out in my despatch before referred to, by this route there are no deserts to cross; Ghilan and Mazanderan would furnish ample supplies; they contain no hostile tribes, and their populations are friendly, or might be made so; and in Armenia, as well as in Northern Persia, Russia would find a hardy people, very different from the Turkomans, to draw upon for soldiers. It is on this account that Armenia and Batoum are of such vast importance to Russia.

It is of little avail to point out that the distance between Armenia and India is great. It is not greater, indeed by no means so great, as that between St. Petersburg and the last conquests of General Kaufmann. An advance upon our Indian frontier through Azerbijan, Ghilan, Mazanderan, and Herat, is unquestionably possible and feasible. The danger of a Russian attack upon India may be remote, but it is the duty of a statesman to look to the future, and to guard the interests of his country against all contingencies, however uncertain they may be.

3. What would be the result as to our direct communications with India by the annexation to Russia of Armenia, or of the eastern part of the province, including the port of Batoum? This question brings me to Lord Lyons' despatch. That experienced and able diplomatist has pointed out to Her Majesty's Government that now that France is rapidly recovering her naval and military strength she is again turning her attention to Egypt, and that her old jealousy of the influence of England in that country is reviving. She assumes, in his opinion, that she has some special claim to preponderance in it, and he observes that "in any Conference that might be held for the settlement of the Eastern Question, France is not unlikely to propose a separation of Egypt from Turkey, the placing it under a joint protectorate, or any other measures which might appear to her likely to prevent England assuming or maintaining the position which would be the natural consequence of our predominant interests in the country. It is not, indeed, impossible that, with or without a Conference, France, if secure of the support or even of the indifference of the Great Continental Powers, might go great lengths in seeking to establish a supremacy of her own in Egypt." These words deserve, it appears to me, the gravest consideration.

It has been maintained that because we now have free access to the Suez Canal it is unnecessary for us to think of an alternative route to India; and that, consequently, it matters little to us whether Syria, Mesopotamia, and the vallies of the Tigris and Euphrates, which would furnish such an alternative, are in the hands of Russia, or of any other power other than Turkey. But what security have we that the Suez Canal can always be open to us? If France should obtain that preponderance in Egypt at which, according to Lord Lyons, she aims, could we at all times, and under all circumstances, when at war with her, or with any Power to which her sympathies or interests may induce her to accord a "benevolent neutrality," or when under the urgent necessity of sending troops to India to deal with a mutiny, a rebellion, or a threatened Russian invasion, could we, I ask, be certain that the Canal might not be closed to us? A few hours' work, a ship sunk in the water-way, an injury to the banks, readily explained by an accident, would be sufficient to render it impassable. In order to make the requisite repairs we might have to seize it and hold it by force, and how greatly would the danger be increased if one of the results of the present war should be the opening of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to the Russian fleet, and the handing over of the Turkish ironclads to Russia—measures which have their advocates even in England, and which public opinion may, unhappily, be brought to consider with indifference.

It would seem, therefore, that it is of the utmost importance that we should have an alternative route to India, and the only one which we can have is that by the vallies

of the Tigris and Euphrates. But if Armenia and the approaches to those vallies, are held by Russia, that route is no longer secured to us, but may be taken from us at any time. Moreover it is only by keeping the complete command of it in the hands of the Porte that we can at all times be sure of it. But even then we must so shape our policy as to be able to rely hereafter upon Turkey. Upon no other nation which could possibly obtain possession of Mesopotamia or could exercise a predominating control over it virtually amounting to possession, could we depend.

Should, for instance, one of the consequences of the annexation of Armenia by Russia be the invasion and conquest of the Province of Baghdad by Persia, by no means an impossible event, we could no longer be certain of a way to the Persian Gulf through Syria or Asia Minor.

One of the first things to which the Porte's attention should be directed when peace is restored is the construction of a railway through Asia Minor and the valley of the Tigris, connected with some port on the northern coast of Syria, to form the great artery through its Asiatic territories, and to bring Constantinople into direct communication with the Persian Gulf. Capital might be found; there is every reason to believe, to carry out an undertaking of such vast importance to the interests of England as well as to those of Turkey. But such a railway could only be of use to us under conditions which would enable us to depend upon the friendship and aid of Turkey. With the command of it, and of the sea, England would have an alternative route to India which would render her almost independent of the Suez Canal.

4. The results upon the trade of England from the annexation by Russia of Armenia and Batoum are obvious. As the acquisition of this port and of Kars would give to Russia a military road into the Turkish possessions in Asia and into Northern Persia, so it would give her a direct trade route into those countries. The commerce which now passes through Trebizond and Erzeroum would be transferred to Batoum. English goods and manufactures would be subjected to heavy, if not prohibitive, duties, and we might find ourselves deprived of a large portion of the trade we now possess with Western Asia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 125.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 1445. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 5, 1877.*

I UNDERSTAND that, at an interview with Safvet Pasha, Prince Reuss endeavoured to impress upon his Excellency that Turkey should make peace at once, and that the course she ought to pursue was to address herself directly to Russia. The military position, his Highness declared, was utterly hopeless, and the Porte could not continue the struggle without bringing upon itself irretrievable disaster. He therefore advised that the example of M. Thiers should be followed, not when he went from Court to Court asking for aid and only receiving humiliating refusals, but when he addressed himself directly to Germany. He showed himself, his Highness observed, a statesman wise enough to know when the time had come to yield, and a patriot ready to risk his fame by agreeing to territorial sacrifices for the good of his country.

Prince Reuss' language seems to have made a good deal of impression on Safvet Pasha, who has always been strongly in favour of peace, and may use his influence in that direction in the Cabinet. It is conjectured that, if negotiations for peace are entered upon, he may possibly become Grand Vizier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

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No. 126.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 1447.) *Constantinople, December 5, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Turkish Parliament is summoned to meet by an Imperial Decree on the 18th instant. A number of Deputies sufficient to form a House has now assembled at Constantinople. It is not yet decided who will be elected President. It is supposed that the choice will fall upon Sadyk Pasha, but some attempt may yet be made to replace Ahmed Vefyk Pasha in an office which he filled with so much ability and patriotism.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 127.

Vice-Consul Sankey to Mr. Layard.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 13.)

Kustendji, November 10, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Russians are settled in their winter quarters, and seem to be supplied with everything except fuel. The staff seem to have taken no steps to cause a supply of wood to be stored here, and the consequence is that the soldiers help themselves. They have cut down the few trees planted by the Turks here and at Medjidieh, and have, as I before stated, uprooted the hedges.

For the last week hundreds of families have been coming in from Baltchik, Bazardjik, and Silistria, and are being distributed amongst the empty villages round about Babadagh, although most of the houses in said villages labour under the disadvantage of being doorless, windowless, and roofless. They have been allowed to return with all their household goods, horses, and cattle.

The Pasha of Silistria has also sent into the Russian lines at Medjidieh all the Christian families left near that place for safety, and also to leave no excuse to the Russians for accusing them of persecution. The Turks seem to have taken nothing from these people. I have also made a point of questioning these people, and they say that they have nothing to complain of as to their treatment by the Turks.

Yesterday a steamer laden with groceries arrived in the roads, and wished to land her cargo. The General Donavuroff went off with the pilot, intending to grant permission, but there happened to be an Englishman with gloves on on deck, and the General, who seems to have visions of English "milors" travelling about as spies, ordered the steamer away immediately. She was laden with goods that are now immensely dear, and I cannot account for her not being allowed to discharge into lighters, except that it was because she carried an English flag.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. F. SANKEY.

No. 128.

Memorandum communicated by the Earl of Derby to Count Schouvaloff, December 13, 1877.

AT the outbreak of the present war those of its possible results which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, would most directly affect British interests, were enumerated in a note addressed to Count Schouvaloff on the 6th May last.

Amongst these it was stated that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to witness with indifference the passing of Constantinople into other hands than those of its present possessors.

The reply of the Russian Government, conveyed in Prince Gortchakow's despatch of 15th May, contained the following assurance on this point:—

"Pour ce qui concerne Constantinople, sans pouvoir préjuger la marche ni l'issue de la guerre, le Cabinet Impérial répète qu'une acquisition de cette capitale est exclue des vues de Sa Majesté l'Empereur. Il reconnait qu'en tous cas le sort de Constantinople est une question d'intérêt commun, qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale, et que si la possession de cette ville devait être mise en question, elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Puissances de l'Europe."

While appreciating the courtesy and friendly character of this answer, Her Majesty's

Government feel that it does not sufficiently meet the dangers against which they desire to guard. They are strongly of opinion—an opinion which the course of events tends still more to confirm—that the occupation of Constantinople by the Russian forces, even though it should be of a temporary character and for military purposes only, would be an event which it would on all accounts be most desirable to avoid.

They cannot conceal from themselves that if such an occupation appeared imminent, public feeling in this country, founded on a just appreciation of the consequences to be apprehended, might call for measures of precaution on the part of Great Britain from which they have hitherto felt justified in abstaining.

It is with the view of avoiding what might endanger seriously the good relations happily maintained between the two countries that Lord Derby has been charged by the Cabinet to express to the Russian Government their earnest hope that, should the Russian armies advance to the south of the Balkans, no attempt will be made to occupy Constantinople or the Dardanelles.

In the contrary event Her Majesty's Government must hold themselves free to take whatever course may appear to them necessary for the protection of British interests, but they sincerely trust and confidently believe that any such necessity will be averted by mutual understanding between the two Governments.

In making this communication they think it right to add that they will be willing, as they have been from the first, to avail themselves of any suitable occasion that may present itself for assisting in the work of mediation and in the restoration of peace.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 129.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Poradim, December 11, 1877, 10 P.M.*

OSMAN PASHA made desperate effort yesterday. He crossed Vid, and, leading advanced column himself, attacked Russians. After fierce fight, lasting four hours, he was repulsed, and surrendered, with his army, which did not exceed 27,000 men; number of guns unknown; Turkish loss about 3,000, Russian about 1,200. Osman shot through leg. Emperor entered Plevna to-day; saw Osman, and returned him his sword.

No. 130.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Poradim, December 12, 1877.*

EMPEROR starts for St. Petersburgh next Friday, remaining a day at Bucharest.

I wait your Lordship's orders respecting my movements at Bucharest.

No. 131.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 536.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 12, 1877, 11·15 P.M.*

I AM informed that at a Council of some of the Ministers held to-day in the presence of the Sultan it was decided to prosecute the war as if it were to be carried on to the last extremity. But there was a general feeling expressed in favour of an immediate peace. Three courses were proposed with a view to obtaining it. First, to appeal directly to Russia, which is strongly urged by the German Ambassador, who gives the Turks to understand that by so doing they will obtain much better terms than if they have recourse to mediation; second, to ask England to mediate; and third, to apply to all the Great Powers for their collective mediation. This last course was approved, and a draft note referred to in my telegram of yesterday, No. 535, was discussed, but objected to on the ground that it did not offer sufficient guarantees for amelioration of condition of Christians; but no decision is taken.

Porte is anxious for peace as soon as possible, to prevent Servia and Greece from taking part in the war and putting forward claims.

It is proposed to bring Suleiman Pasha with part of his army into Roumelia for the defence of Adrianople and to cover Constantinople.

No. 132.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 537.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 13, 1877.*

THE appeal to the Powers, slightly modified, was sent to the foreign Representatives to-day. Could anything more be done to restrain the Servians?

No. 133.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 538.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 13, 1877.*

PORTE will send Commission to Crete, one of them being a Christian, Costaki Effendi, who is favourably known in the Island. Porte seems disposed to do all that can be required of it to satisfy the Cretans.

No. 134.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(No. 539.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 13, 1877.*

THE Sultan would be grateful if you could make inquiry at Russian head-quarters as to state of Osman Pasha's health, as His Majesty is deeply interested in his welfare.

No. 135.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, December 13, 1877.*

EMPEROR of Russia is expected to arrive here on the 22nd instant. Prince Gortchakow will return at the same time.

(Confidential.)

No cessation of hostilities is probable unless Sultan should appeal directly to the Emperor for peace. An armistice might then be brought about. I doubt any offer of foreign mediation being accepted.

No. 136.

Sir R. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tunis, December 13, 1877.*

ACCORDING to telegram from Paris, portion of the Russian Baltic fleet left for the Mediterranean. Great apprehensions entertained that its destination is Tunis, with hostile intentions. Having no means to verify report, I am unable to allay Bey's fears.

No. 137.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, December 13, 1877.*

SERVIAN aggression put off for a few days. Should Porte initiate negotiations in the meantime, Prince Gortchakow would have to state conditions, leaving Prince Milan out, and therefore rendering peace somewhat easier; this apprehended greatly here.

No. 138.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, December 13, 1877.*

A TELEGRAM received here yesterday through Havas Agency from Vienna, giving probable conditions of peace, and in which no mention is made of Greece, has created much anxiety here, and the Government may be forced by popular opinion to adopt an adventurous policy.

No. 139.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, December 13, 1877.*

AS Baron Calice is not aware of Count Zichy having been instructed to declare that the blockade in the Black Sea will not be recognized, it may be presumed that he has not received such instructions, though I have sometimes found one Department in the Ministry unacquainted with what has occurred in another.

No. 140.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 13.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Rome, December 13, 1877.*

THE Italian Consul-General at Tunis telegraphs that he hears from a confidential but certain source, that on the appearance of a Russian squadron off Tunis the French Consul has orders to hoist his flag on St. Louis,* and to leave the Regency with all his *personnel*.

I asked Count Tornielli if he had grounds for supposing that any Russian ships were on their way from the Baltic for the Mediterranean. He replied that he had no information on the subject.

No. 141.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 530.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 529, Sir A. Paget reports, under date of 8th instant, that Signor Melegari informed him that, as no declaration of the grounds of seizure had as yet been communicated to the Italian Legation, or any formal demand for protection addressed to the Italian Minister by the captains, the Italian Government had not been in a position to address a protest to the Turkish Government respecting the seizure of the Italian vessels in question.

Your despatch No. 1415 is about to be submitted to the Law Officers.

No. 142.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 537, I fear Her Majesty's Government can do nothing more to restrain Servia, but we have heard secretly that Austrian Government has spoken strongly to Russia as to Servia joining in the war.

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* The so-called *shrine* or *monument* erected by the French in 1842, by permission of the Tunisian Government, to the memory of St. Louis. It appears to be a construction of some strength, capable of being converted into a fort, and holds a commanding position as regards the town of Tunis and its approaches.

No. 143.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.**

(Telegraphic) *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1877.

DO not act upon my telegram of to-day respecting gun-boat at Kustendji.

No. 144.

The Earl of Derby to Colonel Wellesley.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1877, 8:10 P.M.

THE Sultan has asked Mr. Layard to obtain information as to the state of health of Osman Pasha, in whose welfare His Majesty is deeply interested. Report by telegraph on the subject.

No. 145.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1877, 8:30 P.M.

WITH reference to Wood's telegram, repeated to your Excellency, are any Russian men-of-war on their way to the Mediterranean?

No. 146.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 822.)

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 1392, Confidential, of the 24th ultimo, has been received, and I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve the instructions which you addressed to Mr. Longworth before his departure for Thessaly and Epirus to report upon the state of those provinces.

I sanction the arrangement which you have made with Mr. Longworth for the payment of his travelling expenses, for which vouchers should, as far as possible, be supplied, and of an allowance at the rate of 1*l.* a-day, and I have to request that you will charge the amount thus expended in the accounts of the extraordinary expenses of your Embassy.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 147.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 823. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 1393, Confidential, of the 24th ultimo, relative to the case of the Geshoffs has been received; and I have to state to your Excellency that your proceedings, as reported in that despatch, are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

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* Identic telegrams to Sir A. Paget, Lord O. Russell, and Sir A. Buchanan.

No. 148.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 824. Secret.)

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 1394, Secret, of the 23rd ultimo, has been received, giving an account of a conversation which you had with the Grand Vizier immediately after the receipt of the news of the fall of Kars; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to the Grand Vizier, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 149.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 825.)

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 1406 of the 26th ultimo has been received, in which you request instructions upon the subject of the question of the election of Deputies for Mount Lebanon to the Turkish Parliament, and, in reply, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government concur in the view held by your Excellency and Mr. Consul-General Eldridge, that such representation is desirable, and would not affect the special administrative privileges secured to the Mountain.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 150.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 826.)

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 1418 of the 28th ultimo has been received, in which you convey a request from the Porte that Her Majesty's Government should intercede with the Russian Government, with a view to obtain permission for certain families recently removed from Turkish territory in Armenia to return to their villages, and, in reply, I have to state to you that I have instructed Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh to bring this matter to the notice of the Russian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 151.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 841.)

Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a telegram from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Turkish Ambassador in this country,* commenting upon a recent speech which I made to a deputation, and stating that it is an error to suppose that the Porte is averse to all mediation, and I have to inform your Excellency that I explained verbally to Musurus Pasha, when he communicated to me this telegram, that there was and is no change in the policy of Her Majesty's Government; and that in the speech referred to I simply re-stated the adherence of Her Majesty's Government to the line of conduct which was announced at the beginning of the war, which has received the approval of Parliament, and from which Her Majesty's Government have never varied.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 46.

No. 153.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 847. Most Confidential.)
Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram No. 537 of the 13th instant, in which you inform me that the Porte has dispatched an appeal to the Great Powers, asking for their good offices with a view to put an end to the war, and inquire whether anything more can be done to restrain the Servians from declaring war upon Turkey; and in reply I have to state to you that I fear that Her Majesty's Government can do nothing more to restrain Servia, but I may add that Her Majesty's Government have learnt secretly that Count Andrassy has spoken in strong terms to the Russian Ambassador at Vienna upon the subject of Servia joining in the war.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 154.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 431. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

My Lord,

THE German Ambassador told me in conversation this afternoon that it was understood at Berlin that the Russian Government intended to carry on the war. His Excellency made the remark without any injunction of secrecy or request that it should be considered as confidential.

Count Münster added that Prince Bismarck would certainly not make any offer of mediation, but would in any case wait till he had received a request for the good offices of Germany. Count Münster seemed, however, to think it possible that negotiations for peace might very shortly be initiated.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 155.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 442. Secret and Confidential.)
Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon by appointment, when I placed in his hands a Memorandum embodying a communication which Her Majesty's Government had decided to make to that of Russia. I inclose a copy of this paper herewith for your Excellency's confidential information.*

I had already stated the general purport of the Memorandum to Count Schouvaloff on Saturday last in a conversation which I had held with him after the meeting of the Cabinet, and I pointed out to his Excellency that the opinions expressed had been formed before the fall of Plevna. That event, I said, had not altered or influenced the communication I was now making.

Count Schouvaloff promised to submit the contents of the Memorandum to his Government without delay.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 128.

No. 156.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.**

(No. 685. Secret.)
Foreign Office, December 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I TRANSMIT herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch, marked Secret and Confidential, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh,† inclosing a memorandum which I have placed in Count Schouvaloff's hands, and which embodies a communication which Her Majesty's Government have decided to make to that of Russia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 157.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 130. Political.)
Scutari, November 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Mr. Layard on the decision of Ali Saib Pasha not to take any further steps to be brought into communication with the Prince of Montenegro, and on the military position of affairs here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 157.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Sir,
Scutari, November 26, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that Prince Nicholas' reply has determined Ali Saib Pasha to make no further effort to be brought into communication with His Highness unless he receives instructions from the Turkish Government; and the steps taken by me can give no precise idea to Prince Nicholas of the message I had to convey to His Highness.

The fort of Antivari was energetically bombarded on Saturday night, but with what result it is not yet known.

The vessels conveying the battalions embarked in Crete are now in the Bay of Murto, where they have sought shelter from a violent gale.

The progress of the Montenegrin advance is not at all likely to be checked unless a very considerable increase is made in the regular force now under the command of Ali Saib Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

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* A similar despatch was addressed to Sir A. Paget. † No. 156.

No. 158.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 131. Political.)

Scutari, November 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date, and to report that Prince Nicholas has informed me that, owing to the unsettled nature of his movements, he cannot, for the present, appoint a place where I could meet His Highness.

I have had the honour of communicating the above information to Mr. Layard, adding that Ali Saib Pasha will not renew his attempt to be brought into communication with Prince Nicholas unless he is ordered to do so by the Porte.

Ali Saib Pasha privately thinks, however, that it will be matter for regret if the Porte does not act more directly in the sense of my telegrams of the 22nd instant, for he cannot hope to do much with the reinforcement of three battalions and two iron-clads now due at San Nicolo, the entrance of the River Boyana.

The enemy, nevertheless, in the expectation of a serious attack on the part of the Turks, is concentrating his forces in the neighbourhood of Antivari.

The Turkish operations are not likely to go beyond a bombardment of the shore batteries and the maintenance of the blockade of Antivari. The Montenegrins, on the other hand, are still burning villages, and their progress can be followed by the smoke and flames from Scutari.

Mr. Layard has obtained permission from the Porte for the free transmission of all my telegrams.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 159.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 132. Political.)

Scutari, November 30, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, I have honour to state that, as your Lordship will observe by the concluding sentence in my despatch No. 124, Political, of the 22nd instant, I had foreseen the instructions that might be sent to me, and therefore I limited my action to the measure reported in my despatches of the 22nd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 160.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 133. Political.)

Scutari, December 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that Ali Sahib Pasha left this on the 29th ultimo for San Nicolo, at the mouth of the River Boyana, to there embark on board the ironclad "Orchanie," and proceed to the Antivari roadstead for the purpose of examining the positions of the Montenegrins with a view to future operations.

The authorities here state that they are in frequent communication with the besieged garrison and inhabitants of Antivari, and that they have reason to hope the citadel will be able to hold out until they can relieve it.

Yesterday 122 mountaineers of the tribes of Scialla and Sosci, representing five standards or fractions of those tribes, arrived here with the asserted intention of taking part in the operations against the Montenegrins, provided the Turkish authorities fulfil their promise of giving them an advance of 50 piastres for each man, and furnishing them with Snider rifles.

The Scialla and Sosci are very powerful tribes, and have for some time past been in communication with the Prince of Montenegro, who himself told me, when I was at Orahuka, that he had obtained their adhesion to his cause.

The present scanty representation of the tribes can only be looked upon as a step of the mountaineers to secure themselves from punishment should the Turks repel the Montenegrins.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 161.

Proclamation of the Grand Vizier to the Bulgarians, November 27.—(Communicated December 14, 1877.)

Bulgares!

DEPUIS des siècles vous viviez sous l'égide paternelle du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman; vous jouissiez de votre nationalité et vous exerciez votre culte en toute liberté et sécurité; en un mot, en vivant avec vos compatriotes Musulmans comme de véritables frères et en exerçant librement votre commerce et votre industrie, vous offriez l'exemple d'une famille parfaitement heureuse.

Chacun pouvait constater les progrès que, grâce à la sollicitude et au concours bienveillant du Gouvernement Impériol, vous accomplissiez dans l'instruction publique, l'agriculture et les arts; et la part qui vous était réservée dans l'administration du pays allait chaque jour en augmentant. Le Gouvernement Impérial s'empressait de vous procurer pour vos affaires religieuses toutes les facilités qu'il était en son pouvoir de vous accorder. En présence de ces bienfaits Sa Majesté le Sultan, notre auguste Souverain, était en droit d'attendre de votre part les plus grandes preuves de fidélité et de dévouement, tandis qu'un certain nombre d'entre vous se laissant entraîner par les promesses trompeuses des agitateurs se sont écartés du droit chemin et de la voie de la conciliation pour lever ouvertement l'étendard de la révolte. Cette conduite était de nature à surprendre le monde entier; et les actes de cruauté qui ont été commis ont vivement affligé le cœur de Sa Majesté le Sultan, notre magnanime bienfaiteur. Toutefois je suis persuadé que si ces individus, dont l'audace égalait l'ignorance, avaient seulement regardé autour d'eux, ils auraient constaté de leurs propres yeux que les nations qu'on leur représentait comme vivant dans un bonheur parfait enduraient au contraire les plus grandes souffrances et étaient privées de toute espèce de libertés et, qu'enfin, les mots d'autonomie et de nationalité qu'on leur faisait entendre n'étaient qu'une supercherie grossière destinée à les tromper et à les entraîner dans la voie fatale qu'ils ont malheureusement suivie; et ils auraient, à l'instar de leurs coreligionnaires restés fidèles, apprécié à sa juste valeur le régime paternel sous lequel ils vivaient.

Ils ne se seraient départis sur aucun point des préceptes de l'honneur et de la loyauté. Ils ne se seraient pas faits les instruments aveugles de la ruine de leur propre pays. Mais je rends grâces à Dieu de pouvoir proclamer, à l'honneur de la nation Bulgare, que le nombre de ces hommes aveugles ne constitue qu'une faible minorité, tandis que la grande majorité est restée fidèle à ces principes.

Bulgares, fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté! sachez que notre auguste Souverain, dont nous devons être fiers d'être les sujets, est animé de tels sentiments de justice et de clémence que, loin de retirer au peuple Bulgare son affection et sa sollicitude par suite des crimes commis par une faible minorité égarée, qui elle-même n'avait point la conscience de ses actes, est disposé à accorder le pardon à tous ceux qui, revenus de leur égarement, feraient appel à sa magnanimité.

Bulgares!

Ceux d'entre vous qui, effrayés des crimes commis par leurs compatriotes, ont abandonné leurs foyers et leurs villages et se sont réfugiés dans les montagnes, de peur d'être exposés dans leurs habitations à des punitions ou à des représailles, doivent être rassurés sur leur sort.

Par ordre de Sa Majesté le Sultan je les invite à rentrer dans leurs foyers. La Constitution octroyée par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan répond aussi bien dans le présent que dans l'avenir de la sécurité de tous.

Bulgares!

Les fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté peuvent compter aujourd'hui plus que jamais sur l'aide et la protection des autorités Impériales. Tous ceux qui se permettraient de maltraiter les fidèles sujets de Sa Majesté seront passibles des peines prévues par la loi.

Bulgares!

C'est à vous maintenant de profiter des avantages que je vous offre solennellement au nom du Sultan.

Ceux-là qui, refusant de profiter de ces avantages continueraient de laisser leurs femmes et leurs enfants exposés aux rigueurs de la saison en les tenant éloignés de leurs maisons et en les condamnant aux privations cruelles d'une vie d'aventure, ceux-là seront seuls chargés devant Dieu et devant les hommes de l'opprobre des maux qu'ils auront causés.

Sublime Porte, le 4/16 Novembre, 1877.

No. 162.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 14.)

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Sublime Porte, le 28 Novembre*, 1877.

VOTRE Excellence n'ignore pas que, par la volonté de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, une Garde Civique, composée de tous les hommes valides de vingt à quarante ans, a été récemment formée dans la Capitale et dans les Provinces, mesure qui a déjà donné les résultats les plus satisfaisants.

Aujourd'hui, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, voulant compléter cette œuvre de prévoyance et de sécurité publique, vient d'ordonner la formation d'une armée de réserve, de 150,000 hommes, qui participera, le cas échéant, à la défense du territoire, et qui empruntera une partie de ses éléments à la Garde Civique.

En même temps, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, faisant la plus heureuse application du principe d'égalité entre tous les Ottomans sans distinction de race ou de religion, a appelé par la même Ordonnance Impériale tous les sujets non-Musulmans à participer au service de la Garde Civique, et à contribuer ainsi, au même titre que leurs compatriotes Musulmans, à la défense de leurs foyers et au maintien de l'ordre public.

Vous voudrez bien faire ressortir aux yeux du Gouvernement près duquel vous êtes accrédité toute l'importance de cette mesure qui, indépendamment de son objet militaire, contribuera puissamment à resserer les liens de confraternité qui unissent tous les citoyens de la même patrie.

Vous trouverez, ci-jointe, M. l'Ambassadeur, la communication officielle concernant la mesure dont je viens de vous entretenir, et que vous voudrez bien faire publier avec les explications qu'elle comporte.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SERVER.

Inclosure in No. 162.

GARDE CIVIQUE. CRÉATION DE L'ARMÉE DE RÉSERVE.—Il est à la connaissance de tous que depuis deux ans les graves événements intérieurs dont le passé ne nous offre pas d'exemple ainsi que l'ambition persévérante de la Russie, ont donné naissance à la guerre actuelle que nous avons dû accepter pour maintenir les droits et l'indépendance de notre patrie. Le monde entier a pu apprécier la grandeur des efforts déployés par le Gouvernement Impérial et le concours que ce dernier a rencontré dans ses fidèles sujets jusqu'à ce jour.

Le moment est venu où un nouvel élan, par mesure de prévoyance, doit être donné à ce concours pour assurer le pays contre les desseins de l'ennemi.

En conséquence de ce qui précède, un Iradé Impérial ordonne la formation d'une armée de réserve de 150,000 hommes, concurremment avec la nouvelle milice (Garde Civique) récemment formée et appelée sous les armes.

Toutes les dispositions sont prises pour la mise à exécution immédiate de l'Ordonnance Impériale. Attendu qu'il est avéré que la sauvegarde des droits et de la dignité du peuple Ottoman est l'objet constant de la sollicitude de Sa Majesté le Sultan; attendu que Sa Majesté a pu constater, par des preuves irrécusables, que ses fidèles sujets partageaient unanimement ses sentiments, surtout devant leur empressement digne d'éloges à satisfaire aux devoirs qui leur ont été imposés par la formation de la Garde Civique, créée dans le but de maintenir l'ordre et la sécurité dans l'Empire, c'est-à-dire de participer à la défense de la patrie en restant réunis dans son pays natal, attendu que tous les Ottomans sont appelés au même titre et d'après la Constitution à remplir cette mission; en conséquence, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, en vertu de l'égalité parfaite dont jouissent tous ses sujets, a daigné ordonner que les sujets non-Musulmans qui ont atteint l'âge prescrit par la règle-

ment *ibi hac* seront incorporés dans les bataillons de la Garde Civique en formation à Constantinople.

Il y a tout lieu d'espérer que les sujets Ottomans non-Musulmans, appréciant à sa juste valeur les hautes marques de confiance dont ils sont l'objet de la part du Souverain, s'empresseront de satisfaire avec orgueil au devoir sacré auquel ils sont conviés.

Ainsi qu'il est dit ci-dessus, attendu que l'armée de réserve qui va être formée est aussi appelée à participer à la défense du territoire; qu'une partie des hommes qui la composeront devant être fournie par la Garde Civique, les Gardes Civiques de Constantinople sont appelés, en cas d'urgence, à la défense de la capitale, et ceux d'Andrinople à la défense de cette ville et, éventuellement, à celles des points stratégiques tels que Boulair et autres.

Un commandant spécial sera désigné pour l'armée de réserve.

No. 163.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 14.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 8 Décembre*, 1877.

VEUILLEZ exprimer nos remercîments à Lord Derby pour les assurances qu'il a bien voulu vous donner sur les dispositions du Gouvernement Anglais de faire tout pour obtenir, lors des négociations de la paix, les conditions les plus favorables possibles à la Sublime Porte. Votre Excellence aura soin de faire sentir à sa Seigneurie que toute délibération au sujet des conditions de paix en dehors de la coopération du Gouvernement Impérial pourrait susciter, comme lors des Conférences de Constantinople et du Protocole de Londres, de sérieuses difficultés, et amener un désaccord. Le langage que Lord Derby vous a tenu à propos des exigences de la Russie en ce qui concerne la Bulgarie nous fait croire que sa Seigneurie connaît dès à présent les conditions de la Russie pour le rétablissement de la paix.

No. 164.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 14.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 11 Décembre*, 1877.

PHOTIADÈS BEY nous télégraphie que le Capitaine Mathios, de Kissamo, est parti pour Crète, avec sept individus. Le Capitaine Anagnosti Oudn est également parti pour cette dernière avec la Garde avec dix-sept individus. Le Capitaine Leonides Bayadjoglou, de Kissamo, s'apprête aussi à partir pour Crète avec vingt-cinq compagnons et 400 fusils. Je n'ai pas besoin d'ajouter que le Gouverneur-Général de Crète a reçu les instructions nécessaires au sujet de ces expéditions.

No. 165.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 14.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 12 Décembre*, 1877.

D'APRÈS une dépêche de Moukhtar Pacha, on attribue aux Commandants des troupes Russes l'intention d'envoyer à Erzeroum les 5,000 à 6,000 blessés ou malades militaires Ottomans qui se trouvent à Kars, ce qui serait venir à une mort certaine ces malheureux, qui ne pourraient supporter dans cette saison rigoureuse un aussi long et aussi pénible voyage. Cette mesure serait, d'ailleurs, contraire aux prescriptions de l'Article VI de la Convention de Genève, qui impose aux belligérants soin et soins de soigner dans les hôpitaux de la localité les prisonniers de guerre blessés ou malades. L'armée Impériale observe scrupuleusement cette obligation, et accorde les mêmes soins et le même traitement aux ennemis blessés ou malades qu'aux siens propres. Bien que la Sublime Porte ait donné son Excellence Moukhtar Pacha l'ordre de s'entendre directement avec le Com-

mandant de l'armée Russe pour éviter qu'une aussi cruelle éventualité ait à se réaliser, elle n'en croit pas moins devoir faire appel aux sentiments humanitaires des Puissances, et les prier d'engager le Gouvernement Russe à se désister d'un projet dont la mise à exécution serait un véritable désastre pour les infortunés prisonniers de Kars.

No. 166.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December* 14.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 13 *Décembre*, 1877.

SA Majesté Impériale le Sultan a ouvert aujourd'hui en personne le Parlement, en présence des Ministres, des hauts fonctionnaires de l'Empire, et du Corps Diplomatique. Voici la traduction du discours Impérial :—

"Messieurs les Sénateurs, Messieurs les Députés,

"Je suis heureux d'ouvrir le Parlement et de voir réunis autour de moi les Députés de la nation. La Russie, vous le savez, nous a déclaré la guerre l'année passée, et notre Gouvernement a été contraint de se défendre et de repousser l'agression. Cette guerre continue toujours. Il y a deux ans et demi des troubles avaient éclaté dans l'Herzégovine, et s'étaient propagés dans d'autres localités. Malgré l'égalité devant la loi dont jouissent tous nos sujets, et les immunités qui garantissent leur nationalité et leur langue, une partie de nos populations s'est laissée entraîner sans motifs connus, dans la voie de l'illégalité. Ces égarés ont non-seulement nui à leur patrie et à leurs concitoyens, mais encore se sont portés à eux-mêmes le plus grave préjudice. Les Principautés-Unies, qui avaient le bonheur de posséder une administration intérieure indépendante, se sont mises en état d'hostilité contre notre Gouvernement sans aucune raison légitime. Tous ces graves événements sans précédent dans l'histoire, ont considérablement augmenté les difficultés de la guerre; mais le pays, pour y faire face, se fait un devoir de déployer toute la force de résistance dont il est capable. Tous les Ottomans, par l'abnégation dont ils ont fait preuve dans cette guerre, ont démontré qu'ils étaient animés des plus grands sentiments de patriotisme. Le courage et la valeur de nos soldats ont fait l'objet de l'admiration du monde entier. Je continue à faire appel au concours et au patriotisme de vous tous pour sauvegarder nos droits sacrés. La formation de la Garde Civique, qui chaque jour se perfectionne et se complète, et l'empressement avec lequel nos sujets non-Musulmans s'offrent à prendre part à ce service patriotique, sont des sujets de véritable satisfaction pour notre Gouvernement. La Constitution tout en confirmant et en corroborant les droits et immunités dont jouissaient nos sujets non-Musulmans, leur a accordé l'égalité des droits qui a pour conséquence l'égalité des devoirs. Il était donc naturel qu'ils fussent appelés au service militaire, qui est le premier des devoirs et le fondement même de l'égalité. Aussi la preuve qu'ils donnent de la conscience qu'ils ont de leurs devoirs a été dûment appréciée, et il a été décidé d'ouvrir à la population non-Musulmane les rangs des autres classes de nos armées.

"Le salut de l'Empire est tout entier dans la mise à exécution complète et sincère de la Constitution. Le plus grand de nos vœux a été de voir toutes les classes de nos sujets jouir des bienfaits d'une complète égalité, notre pays profiter des progrès de la civilisation moderne, la réforme introduite dans les finances, l'accomplissement de tous nos engagements, la répartition suivant les principes de l'économie politique des impôts et des redevances, la perception des revenus de manière à ne pas léser les intérêts des populations, la révision de notre système judiciaire conformément aux besoins de l'époque, afin d'assurer la bonne distribution de la justice par nos Tribunaux, la réforme des Vacouls pour faciliter la propriété immobilière, la formation des communes et la détermination de leurs attributions, comme base fondamentale de l'édifice administratif, enfin la réorganisation de la gendarmerie. Mais la guerre a ajourné l'accomplissement de ces vœux. Bien plus, les calamités de la guerre ont dépassé toutes les limites; une nombreuse population non-combattante et inoffensive, des femmes, des enfants, dont la vie et l'honneur auraient dû être respectés selon les usages de la guerre, ont subi des traitements cruels et qui révoltent l'humanité. J'aime à espérer que dans l'avenir rien n'empêchera la vérité de se faire jour à cet égard.

"L'année dernière le projet de loi municipale tant pour le capitale que pour les provinces a été soumis à la Chambre et adopté; les règlements intérieurs du Sénat et de la Chambre des Députés ont été sanctionnés et mis à exécution. Des projets de loi importants, élaborés par le Conseil d'Etat, seront également soumis cette année à vos délibérations, tels que les projets relatifs à la procédure civile, aux élections générales, aux attributions des Ministres et du Conseil des Ministres, à la Haute Cour de Justice et à la Cour des Comptes. Vous aurez à délibérer mûrement sur ces projets et à résoudre certaines questions relatives aux lois des vilayets, de la presse, de l'impôt, et de l'état de siége, qui ont été discutées dans la première session.

"J'appelle votre attention toute particulière sur la loi du budget de l'exercice prochain.

"Nous croyons avoir donné une preuve manifeste de notre ferme intention de persister dans la voie du progrès en portant notre attention sur les réformes intérieures, dans le temps même que le Gouvernement se trouve engagé dans une grande guerre.

"Messieurs les Députés,

"C'est au moyen d'une complète liberté de discussion qu'on peut arriver à la vérité dans les questions législatives et politiques et sauvegarder ainsi l'intérêt public. La Constitution vous en a fait un devoir et je ne crois pas avoir à vous donner d'autre ordre ou d'autre encouragement à cet égard.

"Nos relations avec les Puissances amies sont des plus cordiales.

"Que le Très-Haut bénisse nos efforts communs."

Le 7 *Zilhidjé*, 1294.

No. 167.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 14.)

(No. 540. Very Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 13, 1877.

SULTAN expressed a wish to see me after he had opened Parliament this morning. His Majesty charged me with the following message for the Queen :—

"He would be most grateful to Her Majesty if she would direct his compliments to be conveyed to Osman Pasha, and His Majesty's deep sympathy for him in his misfortune; and his high appreciation of the devotion that he had shown in his service and in that of his country. His Majesty is very anxious to know the nature of his wound, and whether it is serious. He trusts to the generosity of the Emperor of Russia to have proper care taken of him, and to treat him kindly. His Majesty is desirous of learning some details of fall of Plevna, as none have yet reached him, especially as to losses sustained by his army."

His Majesty further desired me to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they would ascertain, without delay, whether the Emperor of Russia would agree to an armistice for about three months. If the Emperor would consent to an armistice, an official request will at once be addressed to Her Majesty's Government to employ their good offices in obtaining one. His Majesty believes that during a (pause in ?) military operations terms of peace might be discussed and agreed; and that, relieved from anxieties of war, he would be able to introduce such measures for the improvement of his Christian subjects as would satisfy Europe of his firm intention to carry out the reforms that he has promised.

His Majesty requests me further to say that, by obtaining for him an armistice, England would be rendering the greatest possible service to Turkey, and earn her deepest gratitude. His Majesty expressed his hope that there would not be another Conference, and his earnest desire to act in all matters with England. It would be of the utmost importance if an armistice could be obtained. It would be the means of avoiding the greatest dangers to Europe, as well as to Turkey, and of sparing a terrible amount of misery and bloodshed, of which the defenceless population, Christian as well as Mussulman, will be the victims if the war continues, and Russian forces cross the Balkans and advance upon Adrianople.

No. 168.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 541.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 13, 1877.

SULTAN opened Parliament this morning. His speech alludes to the war, and deplores that some of his subjects, forgetting their duties, have been the cause of misfortune to themselves and their countrymen, and that the Moldo-Wallachians have declared war without a cause. Praises the devotion and patriotism of his subjects in general, and the valour of his soldiers, and appeals to their support to maintain the rights of the country. Declares that as, by the Constitution, all are equal before the law, and Christians have the same rights and duties as Mussulmans, Christians will be admitted to all the military services. States that in the full and complete execution of the Constitution is the only hope of safety for the Empire; that the finances must be reformed, in order that Turkey should fulfil her engagement; that the public revenue and expenditure should be properly regulated; that the tribunals should be reformed; a proper police instituted; and other reforms, which are specified, should be made. Laments that a vast number of defenceless women and children have been cruelly treated, in violation of the usual laws of war. New laws to regulate civil procedure, the elections, the duties of Ministers and of the Council of Ministers of the Supreme Court and of the Cour des Comptes will be submitted to the Parliament. Complete liberty of speech in discussion is assured to its members.

No. 169.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 542.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 13, 1877.

ACCORDING to trustworthy information there are now in Bulair lines fifty-seven guns in position and fifty-one rifled guns are still required. The works are finished, but shelter-proof quarters and shelters for the men are still in great part wanting.

(With respect to?) Derkos lines, although only twenty-seven works are completed, they offer a most formidable defence, but the armament is defective and powder magazines and shelter-proof cover are incomplete. As yet no arrangements have been made to provide the force necessary to occupy these lines.

No. 170.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 543.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 14, 1877.

SERVIAN Agent presented a note to the Porte this morning, declaring war on the part of Servia against Turkey, on two grounds,—that Turkey had not fulfilled her undertaking, on the recent conclusion of peace, to amnesty her subjects compromised in the war, and that she has been engaged in intrigues against the Principality.

Servian Agent leaves Constantinople this afternoon for Trieste.

No. 171.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December* 13, 1877.

FOLLOWING just received from Colonel Wellesley, dated 7th instant:—

"(Secret.)

"The future military operations of Russia depend on weather and state of the roads when Plevna falls. Opinions are divided; some wishing to push on by Sofia to Adrianople, a movement which would probably disengage Shipka Pass, while others, and among them Todleben, desire to limit operations to siege of Rustchuk.

"The contingency of a Russian advance across the Balkan should not be overlooked.

"I send this by Bucharest, not liking to cypher too often from here."

No. 172.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December* 13, 1877.

THE Emperor passes Sunday in Bucharest on his way to Russia.

No. 173.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, December* 13, 1877.

TURKISH Minister has communicated to the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon a despatch from his Government soliciting the mediation of Europe for the re-establishment of peace. M. Melegari replied that Italy would be happy to unite with other Powers for the attainment of this object.

No. 174.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 14.)

(Telegraphic.) *Ragusa, December* 14, 1877.

AUSTRIAN ironclad, "Don (? Ju) paro," leaves Ragusa to-morrow for Albanian coast.

No. 175.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877, 6·15 P.M.

THE Sultan has charged Mr. Layard with the following message to the Queen:—

"The Sultan would be most grateful to Her Majesty if she would direct his compliments to be conveyed to Osman Pasha and His Majesty's deep sympathy for him in his misfortune, and his high appreciation of the devotion that he had shown in the Sultan's service and in that of his country. His Majesty is very anxious to know the nature of Osman Pasha's wound and whether it is serious. The Sultan trusts to the generosity of the Emperor of Russia to have proper care taken of Osman Pasha and to treat him kindly."

Do what you properly can in the matter.

No. 176.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877, 6·30 P.M.

WITH reference to your very secret telegram of 13th instant, Sultan's message to the Queen respecting Osman Pasha has been telegraphed to Lord A. Loftus and Colonel Wellesley, with instructions to do what they properly can in the matter.

Colonel Wellesley's report of the fall of Plevna was repeated to you yesterday.

No. 177.

The Earl of Derby to Colonel Wellesley.†

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877, 7·15 P.M.

YOU should remain at Bucharest as long as the Emperor does, and can then return home on leave.

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* A similar telegram was sent to Colonel Wellesley.
† Repeated to Lord A. Loftus.

No. 178.

*The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877, 7·15 P.M.

THE Turkish Ambassador has communicated to me a telegraphic despatch dated the 12th instant, in which, after pointing out that the reforms in the Turkish Empire are rendered incapable of execution by the war and misery created by it, the Porte states that it thinks the time has arrived when the belligerents might accept peace without loss of dignity, and Europe might usefully interpose its good offices. The Turkish Government, although feeling that the country has not arrived at the end of its resources, is ready to ask for peace.

Similar despatch communicated to the other Powers.

What view does the Government to which you are accredited take of it?†

No. 179.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.‡

(No. 444.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877.

My Lord,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a telegraphic despatch from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, dated the 12th instant,§ which has been communicated to me to-day by his Excellency Musurus Pasha, in which an appeal is made to the Great Powers for their good offices with a view to bring about negotiations for the conclusion of peace.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 180.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 408. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877.

Sir,

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and read to me a telegram which he had received from his Government, stating the general purport of the Circular addressed by the Porte to all the Powers. His Excellency informed me of the reply which had been given by the Italian Government, the tenour of which had been already made known to me by your Excellency's telegram of the 13th instant.

General Menabrea asked me what view Her Majesty's Government took of the appeal thus made to them. I said, in reply, that the appeal of the Porte was addressed to the Powers collectively, and with a request for their joint mediation, in order to put an end to the war. So far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned, we were ready to join in any steps which seemed likely to have that result. But it was impossible to say more without knowing what might be the intentions of the other Cabinets appealed to. Personally, I thought that a request for mediation at the present moment was not likely to be favourably entertained at Berlin or perhaps at Vienna.

But this was merely a conclusion which I had drawn from various unofficial communications, and I could not speak with certainty on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* Identic telegrams sent to Lord A. Loftus, Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Sir A. Paget, and Sir A Buchanan.

† Omitted to Representatives at belligerent Powers.

‡ A similar despatch was addressed to Mr. Layard, and also to Paris, Rome, Vienna, and Berlin.

§ Server Pasha, December 12.

No. 181.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 853.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your telegram No. 540, Very Secret, of the 13th instant, in which you state that the Sultan has requested you to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they would ascertain, without delay, if the Emperor of Russia would agree to an armistice for about three months; and in reply I have to state to your Excellency that I am unable to return an immediate reply to His Majesty's inquiry, as the question of proposing an armistice to the Russian Government must be referred to the Cabinet, which cannot meet before Monday next.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 182.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 857.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador read to me to-day a telegram expressing the thanks of the Porte for the assurance which I had given his Excellency some days ago, that whenever negotiations for peace were set on foot, Her Majesty's Government would do what lay in their power to obtain favourable conditions for Turkey. Musurus Pasha was instructed to add that any discussion of the terms of peace without the co-operation of the Turkish Government might, as had happened in the case of the Conferences at Constantinople and of the Protocol of London, give rise to serious difficulties, and only end in disagreement. The Porte seemed to have gathered, from what I had said to his Excellency of the probable demands of Russia in regard to Bulgaria, that I was already acquainted with the conditions on which Russia would agree to the re-establishment of peace.

I explained to Musurus Pasha in reply that his Government were mistaken in supposing that I knew what were the conditions of peace likely to be insisted on by Russia. I had no information on the subject, and any remarks that I might have made in reference to it were founded solely on general considerations connected with the origin of the war, and the attitude assumed by the Russian Government towards the Bulgarian population.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 183.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 858. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, December* 14, 1877.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called this afternoon, and placed confidentially in my hands a telegram from his Government, stating that, according to trustworthy information received by them, it was understood that the Emperor of Russia had authorized his Ambassador in London to give Her Majesty's Government fresh assurances that he has no intention of making conquests in Europe, that he will not push on to Constantinople unless the events of the war render it absolutely necessary, and that in no case will he continue the occupation of the Turkish capital after the conclusion of peace. The Porte had learned from the same source that Prince Bismarck was showing himself more and more favourable to Russia, that he advocated the plan of a separate peace, and was opposed to a mediation which should terminate in a Conference. The above-mentioned declaration of the Czar, and this attitude of the German Chancellor, the telegram continued, were understood to have great weight in inducing the British Cabinet to continue their policy of inaction.

I told Musurus Pasha, in reply to this communication, that I had received no recent communications from the Russian Government in the sense supposed.

In regard to what was said of the attitude of Prince Bismarck, I observed that it appeared to be true, as alleged, that he was showing a more and more decidedly favourable

disposition towards Russia, but that I had no certain information of his being opposed to mediation or to a Congress, nor had he expressed to Her Majesty's Government any opinion in favour of direct negotiations between Russia and the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 184.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 71. Political.)

Trebizond, November 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Deputies to the Ottoman Parliament have been elected on the 19th instant, in the same manner as were those of last year, and that they depart by to-day's steamer for Constantinople.

Hadji Emin Effendi, Deputy to the last session, having been re-elected, I need not repeat what I stated of his character in my despatch to your Lordship, No. 12, of the 26th April last.

The second Mussulman Deputy, Emin Effendi, is Under-Secretary of the Vilayet, and is considered by all classes to be a man of great learning and capability, but his connexion with the Government is supposed to be a bar to that freedom of speech which is to be expected from a representative of the population.

The choice of the Christian Deputy has now fallen upon an Armenian, Ovanes Kurekian, a Member of the Administrative Council. The Greeks themselves seem to be satisfied with the appointment, which, however, finds no favour with the Hassonites, he belonging to the opposing party.

In my opinion, Ovanes Kurekian is a man of sound judgment who, with his knowledge of the wants of the populations in this province, might make suggestions of a very acceptable character.

However, much cannot be expected from any Christians who have had connexions with the Ottoman Government, they having been accustomed all their lives to be subservient to the ruling class.

I may even add that, while on the one hand it would be very difficult to find in this province, whether among Mussulmans or Christians, Deputies who could realize thoroughly the momentousness of the trust reposed in them; on the other hand the populations themselves being unable to understand all the importance of the mission confided to their representatives, evince in the elections no interest, beyond that, among the Christian communities, of jealousy that the Deputy should be one of their sect.

This remark applies not only to Trebizond, but also to the surrounding provinces of this part of Anatolia, and perhaps much further.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 185.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 79. Political.)

Odessa, December 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a translation by Mr. Vice-Consul Wagstaff of an article which lately appeared in the "Nicolaief News."

The article is important only in the sense that it may be considered as fairly representing the whole Russian press, with a very few honourable exceptions, in its endeavour by misrepresentations of England to stir up a hostile feeling against her.

The same misrepresentations expressed almost in similar words constituted a leading feature of a lecture lately delivered at Kherson by General Korff, commanding the 34th division.

It has not been my fortune to meet with Russians of the noble aspirations alluded to by the "Times" correspondent at St. Petersburgh.

From before the war till now those I have met have been consistent in stating that Russia must regain the strip of Bessarabia ceded by her in 1856, as I had the honour to

report in my despatch No. 26, Political, of 15th December, 1876; also that Kars and Batoum must be retained should they fall into her hands.

The enthusiasm felt for war previous to its being declared, when it was thought by the majority it would be a mere promenade, has long since disappeared: nor is any sympathy now expressed for the Christians of Turkey. Among the class who form the soldiery there never has been the slightest enthusiasm for the war or even a knowledge why it was undertaken. The Russian peasant is profoundly ignorant of anything beyond his own homestead. His sole care is how to manage to exist—his sole aspiration to lose thought of that care in the gin-shops on the numerous holidays.

Notwithstanding the present absence of enthusiasm, there is certainly, however, a dogged feeling that the war must be carried through to a successful termination, and that its professed object must be attained.

It is then hoped by the thinking among the non-official classes that the sacrifices made by the nation may be rewarded by a Constitutional form of Government, even such as that of Turkey, which, however sneered at in many quarters, is looked upon by the official class in Russia as a disagreeable reality provocative of unwelcome aspirations among the Russian people.

With this class better government of the Christians of Turkey appears to mean, if not extermination of the Mussulmans, the placing them under complete political subjection to the Christians, and it by no means suits them that the Christians should be rendered contented and loyal subjects of the Mussulman Porte.

Educated opinion at Odessa, as now elsewhere in Russia, appears averse to declaring the Bosphorus open to war ships of all nations. Some even go so far as to say it would not be in the real interest of Russia to have a powerful navy in the Black Sea, as it could never hope to cope with England's navy, and would offer a vulnerable point for a triumphal attack which England could hold *in terrorem* over her.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

Inclosure in No. 185.

Article from the "Nicolaief News."

(Translation.)

OUR victories in Asia Minor and the hourly-expected fall of Plevna have stunned and turned the brains of some of the most pronounced Turcophile organs of the English press. For instance, the "Morning Post," "Scotsman," "Standard," and especially the "Daily Telegraph," openly exhort the British Government to take active steps to bring the war to a close, and by simply looking on to tell Russia where England's neutrality must cease. Besides this, according to one of the most trustworthy telegraphic agencies, the British Government have confided to Lord Odo Russell a special mission to the Berlin Cabinet. Of what does this mission consist? It is unnecessary to conjecture; it is closely connected with the demand of the Tory party—that England should take an immediate part in the Russo-Turkish war.

We may say beforehand that Lord Russell's mission to Berlin will be a failure. Germany will in no case be the first to undertake negotiations for peace or even an armistice, but will repeat the same words as the organ of Prince Bismarck lately did:—"Not one of the European Powers ought to interfere with the future action of Russia, and the question of peace or armistice ought to proceed from one of the fighting sides." This categorical declaration has not withheld the British Government from its attempt to conciliate the combatants, and the sending of Lord Russell to Berlin at the same time shows a new turn in the movement of the position of the Eastern question, also of the possibility of the mask disappearing from England's neutrality. It is undesirable that this new complication inevitably reflects itself on the European "concert" in general; but, on the other hand, the proverb, "A bad peace is better than a just war," cannot be entertained here. Have we been fighting from April last till to-day with Turkey? No; we have fought with Turks dressed with English clothing, armed with English guns; we have fought with English Commanders on land and sea; we have fought against Turks who are paid with English gold; we have taken fortresses and batteries erected by English engineers; we have fought apparently with Turkey, but in reality with England. In view of all these circumstances, which form the principal basis of English neutrality, it is impossible not to mark the relations of our Government towards England, which are most peaceful, open, friendly, and silently enduring this or that tirade, and quietly bearing one and the other attempts of the English Government to help Turkey. Nevertheless,

neither English Commanders, arms, nor gold has assisted Turkey, and the Russian armies are moving forward, nearer and nearer to Constantinople. And it is just at this victorious moment for us that England has chosen to openly move against the forward march of the Russian armies and their further victories. One telegram after another informs us of the "feverish preparations in Woolwich Arsenal," of the demand of the Tory party to declare war against Russia, of the necessity of defining British interests by active measures. All this may not show an immediate change in the position of the Eastern question, yet when it does come we are ready to receive it as a desired and expected moment. "What is England?—40,000 soldiers!" as Bismarck despisingly spoke of the "Great Naval Power." We say the same, and "God's will be done."

Nicolaieff, November $\frac{17}{29}$, 1877.

No. 186.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 15.)

(No. 341.) *Athens, December* 8, 1877.

My Lord,

M. TRICOUPI informed me yesterday that Photiades Bey had spoken to him as to the intended departure from Athens for Crete of Hadjé Michalis, who was exiled from that island after the insurrection of 1866-67, and who has been, I believe, since then a pensioner of the Russian Government, and also as to reports that stores of munitions of war were ready to be sent from Greece to Crete.

His Excellency said that he had replied to the Turkish Minister that the Greek Government would fulfil its international engagements; that it would prevent bodies of armed men and stores of arms leaving for Crete; but that it had no right to prevent individuals from leaving Greece.

M. Tricoupi told me that the public press was abusing him for endeavouring to prevent by persuasion an insurrection in Crete, but that he would do his duty; that he nevertheless felt that his arguments against insurrection were not very powerful, and that he was convinced that if Crete was not in a state of insurrection at the time peace came to be concluded, the cause of the Cretans would be neglected.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 187.

The Earl of Derby to General Menabrea.

Foreign Office, December 15, 1877.

Dear General Menabrea,

HER Majesty's Government have received from Constantinople a report respecting the seizure in the Bosphorus, for alleged breach of blockade, of two Greek vessels, chartered by Italian subjects, and referring to a demand by the Italian Government that these vessels should be released by the Prize Courts.

As this matter is one of much importance as regards the light in which Her Majesty's Government consider that the blockade should be viewed by European Powers who are spectators of the present struggle in the East, they have thought that it might not be unacceptable to your Excellency's Government to have, in the form of a Memorandum, a short statement of the facts as they have been reported to Her Majesty's Government, and of the conclusions at which they have arrived upon a consideration of them.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

Inclosure in No. 187.

Memorandum.

IT has been reported to Her Majesty's Government from Constantinople that amongst the vessels lately seized in the Bosphorus for alleged breach of the blockade are two Greek vessels chartered by Italians, which, it is understood, will be condemned by the Prize Court. It is represented that the Italian Government have demanded the release of these vessels, on the following grounds:—

1st. That there has not been an effective blockading squadron; and

2nd. That the vessels in question were seized after they had passed through the line of blockade.

Her Majesty's Government have also learnt from an unofficial source that a further objection has been raised to the confiscation of the vessels on the ground that they were captured when driven through stress of weather into the Turkish port of Baltshick.

As regards the efficiency of the blockade, this is a question of fact. Hitherto the Porte has been pressed by the foreign Representatives to take such measures as would increase the efficiency of the blockade, which was thus recognized as existing; and Her Majesty's Government is not, with the information at present before it, prepared to say that the fact that the two Greek vessels in question got out of a port said to be blockaded is a sufficient proof of the inefficiency, and therefore justifies Her Majesty's Government in impugning the validity of the blockade.

As regards the other objections raised, Her Majesty's Government, founding themselves on the decisions of the maritime tribunals of this country and of the United States, conceive that they are not sustainable in law.

It has been laid down by British and American Judges and jurists* that if a ship which has broken a blockade is taken in any part of the same voyage, she is taken *in delicto*, and is subject to confiscation, and this liability even continues to the end of the return voyage; and it has further been laid down that a vessel which has committed a breach of blockade by egress shall not have her offence purged by being driven by stress of weather into a port which is not her port of destination.

Foreign Office, December 15, 1877.

No. 188.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, December* 14, 1877.

WAR against Porte declared this day by a Proclamation of Prince Milan, in which he states that he is going to fight, under the auspices of the Czar, for Servian independence and liberation.

Enactment of martial law and also closing of all schools took place.

Aggression probably to be directed with Roumanians against Widdin, and also at the Yavor. Prince Milan goes to latter army Sunday.

Application to His Highness by a Bosnian insurrectionary agent for assistance last week has been refused on account of Russian instructions, which limit Servian acquisitions to district assigned to them with reference to supposed (wishes?) of the three Emperors.

No. 189.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 15.)

(No. 544.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 14, 1877.

THE Porte will not, I think, take any measures against Servia until she has actually commenced hostilities, and I have strongly advised this course; but, should Servians cross the frontier, Porte will probably at once launch upon the Principality the large force of irregulars, amounting, it is said, to nearly 40,000 men, now in Bosnia, and such regulars as it can spare.

No. 190.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 15.)

(No. 545. ?)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 14, 1877.

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs, dated to-day, as follows:—

"This morning 1 Russian Colonel, 5 subaltern officers, and 145 prisoners (40 of them

* See cases cited in:—Sir T. Twiss ("Law of Nations in Time of War"), 218-220; Hall on Neutrals, 161; Abdy's Kent, 373; 3 Phill. 590; Wheaton's International Law (Dana), s. 523; Tudor's Leading Cases on Merc. Law, p. 893; 2 Calvo, p. 572 (s. 1185).

wounded), with 11 guns, taken at Elena, arrived here by special train, and will leave this evening for Constantinople. They are kindly treated and the wounded properly attended to by Turkish authorities. The Colonel's name is Klevezhl (*sic*). He commanded No. 36 Orlowski Regiment. At his request I solicit your Excellency to telegraph to Embassy at St. Petersburgh to inform his family, through military authorities, that he is safe and quite well."

No. 191.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 546.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 15, 1877.*

IN consequence of the great distress now existing in Constantinople, and the depreciation of the paper currency during last few days, it is believed that, if the war continues, very serious agitations and disturbances directed even against the Sultan may take place. As this information comes to me from good sources, I think it desirable to communicate it to your Lordship, although it may be exaggerated. Although there is a good deal of discontent at the present time, there has been no outward manifestation of it at as yet. I shall inform Admiral Hornby, in answer to a despatch from him, that as the safety of the fleet requires that he should proceed with it to Vourla, I see no reason why he should not do so, as that place is in direct telegraphic communication with Constantinople.

No. 192.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, December 15, 1877.*

EIGHTY Krupp mountain-cannon and their ammunition arrived at the Piræus yesterday for the Greek Government.

Above sent to Constantinople.

No. 193.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, December 15, 1877.*

I CANNOT learn that any Russian ships of war have left Cronstadt, which is now blocked with ice. Two hundred sailors have lately been sent down to the Danube.

I have requested Minister for Foreign Affairs to forward Sultan's message to Osman Pasha by telegraph.

I will inform your Lordship of his reply.

No. 194.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15, 6·30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, December 15, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, Count Tornielli informed me that the instructions sent to the Italian Representatives in reference to the Turkish despatch of the 12th instant, are to the effect that the Italian Government will not separate itself from the line of conduct which the other Powers may think advisable in order to bring about pacific results, which are certainly desired by all.

The impression is that, unless Germany and Austria agree to co-operate, which is thought doubtful, there is little chance of success.

A copy of Turkish despatch has been given unofficially by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Russian Ambassador, in case he thinks fit to bring it before his Government.

The belief here evidently is that military resources of Turkey are exhausted, that even Adrianople is incapable of serious resistance, and that Russians will not make peace until they have at least arrived before that place.

The idea of a direct appeal from the Sultan to the Emperor was incidentally hinted at by Count Tornielli as affording perhaps the best chance of stopping the war at this moment.

No. 195.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, December 15, 1877.*

IN reply to an inquiry two days ago at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as to the object for which the Austrian ship of war mentioned by Mr. St. John had sailed from Pola, I was told she was to protect Austrian subjects and shipping on the coast of Albania.

No. 196.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, December 15, 1877.*

GERMAN Government has received from the Turkish Ambassador the same telegraphic despatch as Her Majesty's Government from Constantinople, asking Europe to interpose its good offices in favour of peace.

German Government will wait to hear the opinion of other Powers before coming to any decision, and will take no initiative in the matter.

No. 197.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *Vienna, December 15, 1877.*

DURING my conversation to-day with Count Andrassy he said, in confidence, that Prince Bismarck would be unwilling to make any communication to Russia in which Germany might appear to be advocating the views of the Porte; but his Excellency said he could not concur in this view, though, if the Porte should ask for the good offices of the Powers on the basis of general reforms now indicated, he could only forward their proposals to Russia without supporting them.

What apparently he would prefer would be that the Porte should induce Russia to state terms on which she would be willing to make peace, and then to ask for good offices of Powers to obtain a modification of them, as in that case he seemed to think that the position of England and Austria, whose neutrality is conditional, would be more easily maintained, and their influence more effectually exercised.

From his Excellency's manner of expressing himself, it was difficult to distinguish the views which he wished me to submit to your Excellency from those upon which he has not yet clearly formed an opinion; but nothing could be more decidedly expressed than his determination to maintain his understanding with England, and his anxiety that the two Powers should move in concert for the attainment of the objects on which they have agreed.

No. 198.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, December 15, 1877.*

ON my asking to see Count Andrassy to-day on the subject of the overtures of the Porte communicated to me in your Excellency's telegram yesterday, he proposed to call at the Embassy later in the day, and has just done so.

He said that he could only express a personal opinion till he had taken the Emperor's orders; but as he is anxious that England and Austria shall act in conformity with the

understanding that (is?) existing between them, he has decided at once to submit his views to your Lordship's consideration, and to ascertain whether you may be disposed to adopt them.

As an immediate answer to the Turkish Ambassador, he will state that he will consult with the other Powers on the subject of his communications.

As an eventual answer, he considers that it would not be for the interest of the Porte to place general constitution for the Empire under the guarantee of Europe, and that Powers could not support a proposal for peace on such a basis without acting in contradiction to the London Protocol and their previous declarations and proposals to Turkey with respect to certain of its provinces.

He therefore submits for your consideration whether the Powers should not answer that, though most desirous to promote conclusion of peace, they could not accept a proposal to use their good offices for that purpose on the basis indicated in the communication now made to them; and if Her Majesty's Government agree with him on this point, he would be prepared to join them in suggesting to the other Powers that they should all make a communication in this sense at Constantinople.

In expressing this opinion confidentially, he reserved to himself the right to formulate it later, after receiving the orders of the Emperor.

No. 199.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)*

Bucharest, December 15, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
OSMAN PASHA poisoned himself last night, and he is dead.

No. 200.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 547. Secret.) *Constantinople, December 15, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
THE Sultan recently authorized General Klapka to inform Count Andrassy and the Emperor of Austria that Turkey would be ready to cede Bosnia and Herzegovina to Hungary if Austria would unite with Turkey against Russia. General Klapka received to-day Count Andrassy's answer, which was to the effect that he would not deviate from his settled policy, which was neither to annex or occupy Bosnia and Herzegovina, nor to permit, if he could prevent it, the formation of any new Slav State in Turkey, but to maintain status of the independence and integrity of the Turkish Empire.

General Klapka, from whom I have received this information, is directed to thank Sultan in the Emperor and Count Andrassy's name. The communications have passed in cypher through Count Zichy.

No. 201.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 548. Secret.) *Constantinople, December 16, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
I HAVE learnt from a good, though not official, source that Count Zichy is endeavouring to ascertain from the Porte the conditions of peace which it would accept, and that the following were suggested by him:—

1. Cession of Batoum and the valley of Tchouruk Su.
2. Autonomous administration of Bulgaria under the sovereignty of the Sultan, with Christian Governor-General named by the Porte, with the concurrence of the Powers. Turkish troops to continue to occupy fortresses.
3. Freedom of entrance to the Dardanelles for the fleets of all Powers.
4. Independence of Roumania.

* Telegraphed to the Queen and Lord Beaconsfield.

5. Annexation to Servia of Little Zwornik and a small portion of Bosnian territory.
6. Cession to Montenegro of the part of the Herzegovina which she now occupies.

Austria, I am assured, gives the Porte to understand that if it will accept these conditions in principle, she might make them the basis of an officious mediation.

No. 202.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 549.) *Constantinople, December 16, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
I HAVE just seen Count Zichy, and have reason to believe that the information in my telegram of this morning as to Austrian views of the conditions of peace is correct. He expressed himself clearly in favour of the cession of Batoum and the opening of the Dardanelles, and as to a limited autonomy of Bulgaria, but spoke about Servia with a good deal of bitterness, and seemed to think that independence of Roumania might be prejudicial to Austria, on account of its effect upon the Wallachian population of Transylvania.

He seems to think present Ministers would not agree to any cession of territory, and that they should be replaced by Safvet Pasha as Grand Vizier, and Sadyk (Pasha ?) as Minister for Foreign Affairs. He told me confidentially that he had come to this conclusion from a conversation that he had yesterday with Server Pasha. He said that he had not yet heard from Count Andrassy how the appeal of the Porte to the Powers for their mediation had been received at Vienna.

No. 203.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 550.) *Constantinople, December 16, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
THE Sultan has just learnt, with great sorrow, the death of Osman Pasha. The Porte would be greatly obliged to your Lordship if you would request Russian Government to allow the body to be sent to Constantinople. If this request be granted, the body should be delivered to the Turkish authorities at Rustchuk.

No. 204.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 551.) *Constantinople, December 16, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
THE Porte has decided to send a Circular to the Powers, through their Representatives abroad, protesting against the conduct of Servia, and declaring that it deposes Prince Milan.

No. 205.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

Athens, December 15, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
I AM informed upon good authority that Hadji Michalis, with thirty men, forty rifles, and ammunition, left the Piræus the day before yesterday for Crete in a sailing-vessel.

No. 206.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

Scutari, December 15, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
THE Austrian packet agents having notified that the blockade prevents their steamer calling any longer at Durazzo, the only remaining sure means of communication with the

outer world is by telegraph, and of this we should probably be deprived at the most critical moment. British interests here are political, as there is no direct commerce or navigation, and the only English residents are the members of my family. I venture to place these facts before your Lordship as my colleagues are telegraphing much in the same sense to their respective Governments, and await your Lordship's instructions as to the course I must adopt for keeping up my communications with your Lordship and Mr. Layard. If any reasons exist for the blockade of Durazzo they are not apparent here, the Montenegrin military operations in no way affecting that part of Albania.

No. 207.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 16.)

Vienna, December 16, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

AN article in the "Fremden Blatt" this morning appears to me to express Count Andrassy's views better than he did himself. It states that to a proposal to mediate on the basis suggested by the Porte Russia would answer, that before the war Europe had rejected at Constantinople what the Porte offers to-day, and can Russia be expected to accept such a basis of negotiation with Armenia and Bulgaria in her hands; but the paper says that the negotiations for the establishment of peace must not be broken off. The way to peace may be difficult, but it will lead to success if the Powers do not give up the connection (Fühlung) with the Porte which they have attained by the Turkish note.

No. 208.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 180. Political.)

Belgrade, November 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that it is believed at Belgrade that the entire militia will be sent shortly to the frontier. This is probable, as, on Sunday before last, the 18th instant, a communication is said to have been received from Russia desiring that Servia should prepare to enter into action at the shortest notice.

On the 24th instant, M. Ristitch, the Foreign Minister, told a friend of mine that no determination had been taken yet, and might not be taken for weeks, though it was not impossible that a decision might be arrived at within twenty-four hours.

Subsequent information has reached me, according to which it appears that the entire Belgrade militia will depart from here, fully equipped, by slow marches to their destination on the 29th and 30th instant.

Although everything points to an early completion of preparations, nothing will be done except in strict accordance to the wishes of the Emperor Alexander and His Majesty's military advisers.

It will entirely depend on instructions to be received from that quarter whether Servia returns to inactivity or whether Prince Milan assumes the offensive, and when; as also the plan of operations to be followed will be entirely drawn up by Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 209.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 181. Political.)

Belgrade, December 3, 1877.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH it does not appear that a final decision has been come to on the subject of commencing hostilities against the Porte, the militia is being gradually but slowly concentrated for action on the frontier.

The most striking feature in all this is that the districts on the Drina, on the Bosnian frontier, are left greatly exposed to a Turkish invasion, not being sufficiently protected.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 210.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 183. Political.)

Belgrade, December 7, 1877.

My Lord,

IT appears from the remarks contained in the more influential papers published at Vienna and Pesth that the probability of a renewal of an aggressive action on the part of this Principality is at length looked upon as extremely probable in both these capitals, and that the way in which Servian hostilities might affect Austro-Hungarian interests is being discussed there, with a view to come to the conclusion that the mere state of war in this conterminous province does not in the least interfere with those of the neighbouring Empire.

Your Lordship will perhaps kindly bear in mind with what incredulity my reports from here, sent in February and March 1876, as to the intention of Servia to go to war were met at the time at Vienna and St. Petersburgh.

The correspondence presented to Parliament in 1876 (Turkey No. III) contains an official record of this official disbelief of Count Andrassy and Baron Orczy, at pages 9, 46, and 49 (Nos. 23, 77 and 84), and of Prince Gortchakoff and Count Schouvaloff, at pages 27 and 337 (Nos. 59 and 502).

A very similar appreciation of Prince Milan's plans has, it appears, prevailed at some European Courts not very far back; but, if the Vienna papers can be credited, any illusion that may have existed on the subject has disappeared during the last fortnight.

The most influential German paper of Hungary, the "Pester Lloyd," in discussing this subject, comes to the conclusion that if Servia emancipates herself of the suzerainty of the Porte, she will have to submit instead to the moral influence of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

It is difficult to foresee what steps Austria will ultimately adopt to prevent that Servia should not be transformed into a State likely to become the focus of intrigues hostile to her tranquillity.

The cessation of the European protectorate and guarantee is sure to follow and accompany a recognition of independence, and any open to a powerful military Power new modes of making its influence felt.

But besides independence, Russia is reported to have promised Prince Milan an accession of territory as the price of his co-operation.

The semi-official "Fremden Blatt" has pointed out that Austria cannot tolerate an enlarged Servia—a sort of new Piedmont—on her frontiers.

That Vienna paper has stated, on the 28th ultimo, that Austria can look on with perfect quiet at a new Servian war, "because her allies have declared their determination not to allow any territorial changes at variance with that Power's view of her interests."

The Berlin correspondent of the "Times" has alluded pointedly to such a promise in a copy of that paper which was printed on the 30th ultimo.

It is by no means clear that this is the view taken by Servian politicians, or that these have a clear understanding that their hopes of aggrandisement, for which they are again rushing into war, are to be held as subordinate to the interests of Austria. I am rather inclined to believe that the language of Russian Agents here is very different, and that, if the Servians could have been positively enlightened upon this subject in time, affairs here might have taken a different turn.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 211.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 184. Political.)
Belgrade, December 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying Report on the Servian army, drawn up by Mr. Vice-Consul Marshall.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 211.

Report by Vice-Consul Marshall respecting Servia's State of Preparation.

IN view of Servia's probable participation in the Russo-Turkish war, magazines for food have been formed in the following places:—

Cuipriga.	Zaiczar.
Kladova.	Knijazevaz.
Belgrade.	Kruschevaz.
Negotin.	Alexinats.

The largest stores are at Cuipriga, Kladova, and Belgrade, the first containing the crops of six districts. In all there is said to be sufficient to keep 50,000 men for one year. The stores on the Timok were supplied from Roumania.

The following appointments have just been made:—

General Protich to be Chief of Head-Quarter Staff.
Colonel Andjelkovic to be Chief of Staff of Active Army.
Colonel Katanich to be Chief of Intendance.
General Belimarkovic to be Commander of Schumadeja Corps.
Colonel Leschjanin to be Minister of War.

Part of the Belgrade brigade, 1st class, was called out here on the 29th ultimo to the number of 500 regulars and 800 first-class militia. The latter had no idea of keeping any sort of formation on the march, and only half of them were armed, which, together with the rags they wore in lieu of uniform, made them a sorry spectacle.

After halting three days at Grotska, 20 miles from here on the Semendria road, where they were joined by the rest of the brigade, or rather most of the rest, for stragglers often the worse for liquor are still to be found going in that direction, and where they nearly starved owing to a break down in the commissariat, they marched to Semendria on the 2nd December to join the brigade belonging to the latter place. The whole division proceeds to Paracui on December 8, from which place they are supposed to relieve the brigades now at Zaiczar and Negotin, and Knijazevaz.

A moment will thus shortly arrive when the Government can have a triple force at each of the above places without creating suspicion.

1. The men of the district whose notice can be given forty-eight hours previously.
2. The Posarevátz Branissevo brigades, which have completed their training.
3. The relieving brigades Belgrade and Semendria.

The artillery of the Schumadeja corps will not proceed to the front until it is actually required.

The deficiencies in equipment of the militiamen were to be made good at Grotska or Semendria.

To simplify the amalgamation of regulars and militia in the Schumadeja corps, they will simply form the leading company, a proposal which appears vicious in the extreme from whatever system of tactics it be regarded.

Thus if the whole battalion be extended as skirmishers, then three-quarters of its front will be devoid of the *morale* giving element, whilst if only the leading company skirmishes, the regular company will have suffered too much to be able to do much at the last stage of the attack.

The volunteers lately enrolled at Cuiprija have gone to Alexinatz.

The average *physique* of all the men I have seen is better than I expected, but they are badly equipped, badly armed, badly officered, and I do not think they are eager for another war. Should the Turks send a horde of Bashi-Bazouks over the Drina, which flank the Servians seem hardly to be guarding at all, I should not be surprised if the militiamen returned home to a man.

My latest information is to the effect that Servia only possesses 60,000 Peabody rifles in all, a considerable number of which had to be re-straightened at Kragujevaz, which should make them dangerous to handle.

(Signed) LIONEL MARSHALL.

No. 212.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 185. Political.)
Belgrade, December 7, 1877

My Lord,

A VARIETY of perfectly unfounded rumours have found their way into the telegrams, published at Pesth and Vienna, from Belgrade, relating that I had been instructed by your Lordship to renew a protest against the war, and had either alone, or with some of my colleagues, taken all kinds of steps to counteract the disposition of this Government.

I should not have troubled your Lordship with any allusion to this subject, but I think it right to state, should these rumours reach your Lordship from some other quarter, that I am quite unable to account for their origin, unless by the supposition that there are some parties here interested to enhance their deserts with the Russian Court by spreading similar reports, with a view to accredit the belief that they are incurring the friendship of all the other Powers for the sake of the Russian alliance alone.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 213.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 328 Political.)
Cairo, December 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I AM informed that the Porte has asked for further assistance (about 12,000 men) from Egypt in such pressing terms that, notwithstanding his great financial difficulties, the Khedive cannot refuse to comply with the demand; but at this moment the supply of so large a number of troops will be a most serious strain upon the resources of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 214.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 20. Political.)
Ragusa, December 6, 1877.

My Lord,

IN last month's number of "Blackwood's Magazine," at page 667, the following passage appears in an article entitled "A Recent Visit to Montenegro and its Capital," which I have every reason to believe has emanated from the pen of Mr. Forsyth, M.P.:—

"We took some pains to ascertain from good authority whether there was any truth in the stories about their (the Montenegrins) cruelty to wounded Turks, whom the fortune of war had put into their hands, and we were glad to find that they are false."

I regret not to be able to corroborate the statement regarding Montenegrin forbearance towards Turkish prisoners.

On my journey up the Danube last spring, one of my fellow-travellers—a Montenegrin who had accompanied General Tchernaieff back to Russia—was boasting to me and to a Russian colonel of his having cut off the noses of eight Turks.

The colonel was so delighted at the joke as to burst into fits of laughter; and, to celebrate so heroic a deed, ordered up a bottle of wine.

On expressing my abhorrence at such cruelty, the Montenegrin excused himself by saying that had he been made a prisoner by the Turks, both his eyes would have been put out.

The wife of my late German colleague, Baroness de Lichtenberg, related to me that

one day, impelled by curiosity to examine the contents of a small canvas bag belonging to a Montenegrin in the hospital to which she was attending, for the safety of which the owner appeared especially solicitous, she discovered it to be full of human ears and noses.

In justice to the Prince of Montenegro, however, it is but fair to state that His Highness, who is known to be a humane man, has given strict orders that Turkish prisoners should on no account be mutilated; and that whenever a case of disobedience has been brought to his notice the accused has invariably been so punished and disgraced as to leave him no alternative but exile or suicide.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 215.

Consul St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 21. Political.)
My Lord, *Ragusa, December 9, 1877.*

A RUMOUR having been circulated here that an Italian ship-of-war had appeared off the Albanian coast and there landed an officer, I lost no time in making inquiries whether there was any foundation for such a report.

My Italian colleague informs me that it is perfectly true that an Italian gun-boat had been sent to the Albanian coast, with the view, he said, to protecting a number of small trading-vessels that are constantly crossing the Adriatic with provisions, and giving them timely warning of the blockade that is now established at Spitza by two Turkish iron-clads.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 216.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 866. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Pesth, December 1, 1877.*

DURING a conversation which I had this evening with Count Andrassy, his Excellency spoke to me of a telegram which he had received from Count Beust, inquiring, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, what course would be pursued by Austria-Hungary in the event of the Russian army advancing on Constantinople.

He said he had expressed surprise in his reply that the Austrian Ambassador should not have answered this question without referring to him for instructions, as the declarations he had already made on the subject were sufficiently explicit, and he had not shown any indication to withdraw from them.

These declarations had expressed his objections to a Russian army occupying Constantinople, and had stated that, though he did not intend to interfere with the operations of the war, he would insist, in the event of such an occupation, on the Russian army not remaining there; and he observed to me that, as he believes a demand by a Government who can support it with nearly a million of soldiers would be complied with, he feels confident that Russia will not enter Constantinople, and incur the risk of her being called upon to evacuate it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 217.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 868. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December 5, 1877.*

HAVING met Count Andrassy accidentally to-day, I inquired what were the purposes to which he referred when he had spoken to me on Saturday last of Austria requiring the services of her ships of war in the Adriatic.

His Excellency evaded giving a direct answer to this question by saying that the number of the Austrian cruizers was limited; and as I then asked if he intended to protect the Albanian coast from Garibaldians, he answered, "Certainly so, if they were to attempt to effect a landing there."

Subsequently to this conversation, which was of a strictly private character, I received Mr. Wyndham's telegram to your Lordship, of which a copy was forwarded to me yesterday, reporting the opinion of M. Tricoupi as to future eventualities in European Turkey.

But though the views which he expresses would be carrying out a programme attributed to Prince Bismarck, I have, as yet, seen no sign here of a change in the policy of Austria.

I venture also to observe that if M. Tricoupi has no better sources for his information than the reports of the Greek Minister at Vienna, it may be of questionable value, as Prince Ipsilanti is well known to be a speculative politician, who is apt to form conclusions from doubtful premises, and whose anticipations of political combinations are rarely realised.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 218.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 878. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December 12, 1877.*

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Green's despatch, of which a copy was transmitted to me in your Lordship's No. 374 of the 5th instant, reporting that four guns had been landed at Cattaro for the Prince of Montenegro, I am told by Baron Orczy that four guns bought by the Prince at Venice were landed during last summer at Cattaro, but have been detained there at the Custom-house as contraband of war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 219.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 883.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December 12, 1877*

AT a meeting of the Hungarian Delegation on the 9th instant, Count Széczen made a long speech, severely criticising the Eastern policy of Count Andrassy, which he reviewed from the entry of the latter into office until the present time.

After comparing the powerful and independent state of Turkey in former days with her present degenerate condition, a condition which required that, in the interests of Austria-Hungary, every exertion should be made to arrest a decay so threatening to the balance of power in Eastern Europe, Count Széczen said that the influence of Austria during the last few years would seem to have been employed in an exactly opposite direction; and as for the part which Count Andrassy had twitted him with having taken in the signature of the London Convention of 1870, he would remind his Excellency that he only carried out his instructions on that occasion, and that he had at the time expressed himself as of opinion that, instead of that partial transaction, the time had come for a fresh Treaty to re-arrange the principle of the integrity of Turkey.

The speaker, after alluding to the fruitlessness of the Berlin Memorandum, the failure of which, he said, Count Andrassy should have foreseen, was certain, without the previous approval of England having been secured, proceeded to condemn the share taken subsequently by the Government in what were certain to be—in consequence of the attitude of Russia—abortive attempts at patching up an arrangement.

Count Széczen said, in conclusion, that it was constantly asserted that it would be time enough to think of the interests of the Monarchy when peace was concluded; but without dwelling on the untoward examples of 1805 and 1866, when, to the destruction of similarly sanguine expectations, *væ victis* terms were imposed in the first instance by the Great Napoleon, and in the second by the victorious Prussians, he would remind the

Delegation of the differences of opinion on this very Eastern question which arose between the Prussian and Austrian Plenipotentiaries at the Congress of Paris in 1856. For his part, when people talked of the interests of the Empire being protected if peace came to be concluded, he preferred to remember the bold declaration of the Hungarian Government, in which the readiness of the army and the devotion of the people were so much insisted upon as real guarantees (such as diplomacy could not furnish), that the rightful claims of the Monarchy should be defended.

Other speakers followed Count Széczen, and on the following day Count Andrassy replied, in a speech of which I have the honour to inclose a French translation, and in which his Excellency defended the foreign policy of the Government, and indicated at some length, but in general terms, the course which they intend to pursue in regard to the Eastern Question.

His Excellency said he agreed with Count Széczen that Treaties have lost the power they once had. By their side now stands a "factor of decisive importance—might," and Treaties being now-a-days guaranteed only so far as it is possible to uphold them by force, his great anxiety has been to avoid wasting the strength of the Empire.

As to the alliance of the three Emperors, his Excellency declared that the Monarchy enjoys full and entire liberty of action, and there is not a State in Europe which possesses to a greater degree the certitude that its "legitimate and rightful interest will be secured in every respect and in every quarter."

Referring to objections that had been made to the Treaty of Commerce with Roumania, his Excellency deprecated alienating the good will of the Danubian States by an indifference to their material well-being, and he said the Christian population in Turkey should not be allowed to entertain the erroneous idea that the maintenance of Turkey in the same position which she held previously to the outbreak of the present troubles is considered indispensable to the interests of Austria-Hungary. "I declare," said his Excellency, "I should not have the courage to engage in an attempt to defend to this extent the *status quo* in Turkey. By 'defend,' I mean not by words but by actions, and I ask whether in that sense it could be permitted that the forces of the Monarchy should be employed for an object in the realization or in the legitimacy of which there is not a statesman in Europe who believes, not even among the Turks themselves."

His Excellency said that as to guarantees for assuring the interests of the Monarchy, Count Szeczen might rest satisfied that foreign Governments were well acquainted with what the Austrian Government considered those interests to be, and that if no public definition of them had been given, it was because all appearance of distrust or defiance in regard to any other Government had been carefully avoided. He reminded the Delegation how melancholy had been the effect of the noisy declaration made by the French Government to the Chamber on the eve of the war with Germany. This was a course of proceeding which, Count Andrassy said, he wished to avoid, convinced as he was that the more dignified and effective mode was "to define our interests quietly and in a manner that, without exciting susceptibilities, carries with it the conviction that declarations made with such deliberation ("avec tant de mesure") will, in case of necessity, be supported with the greatest energy."

The following day Count Andrassy, trusting to the discretion of the Delegation and to an understanding that his observations would not be made public, confided to them the secret history of the political transactions of the Government in regard to the Eastern Question during his tenure of office. His Excellency is stated to have spoken four hours, and to have so far satisfied all parties that a resolution by Count Széczen, declaring that a "public discussion on foreign relations would, under present circumstances, be inopportune," was unanimously adopted.

A similar discussion took place yesterday in the Austrian Delegation, during which Count Andrassy was sent for by the Emperor, but on his return he made a speech in reply to those in which he understood that his policy had been criticized during his absence.

He said he understood that alarm was felt lest annexations should be made to the Monarchy, but on that subject he could only say that it was at least satisfactory to think that the apprehension was now felt lest Austria might acquire territory, and not, as in former European wars, lest any should be taken from her. Such a change in political combinations could hardly be called the result of a bad policy.

Preparations for entering into the war would have cost millions; and he would ask his critics if they could define any national interest that had suffered from the Government having declined to call upon the country to make the vast sacrifices that would have been required for such a purpose. He would ask to be told what had he done which he ought not to have done, and what had he left undone that he ought to have done. Could he

have prevented the war? Had he not maintained the dignity and interests of the Empire without imperilling their friendly relations with the other Powers?

It might be said that it was more easy to state this than to prove it, but he would answer that it was more easily proved than stated; for in his opinion these discussions should be avoided as injurious to the State, and present silence will not prevent the results of the Government policy being judged hereafter.

He would, finally, refer them to the declaration made by Prince Auersperg in the Reichsrath on the 4th of last May, namely, that "the Emperor and King, in his endeavours to preserve friendly relations with foreign Powers, and at the same time to maintain the interests of the Empire, felt the fullest confidence in the devotion of his people and the patriotism of their Representatives;" that, said his Excellency, was our stand-point then, and it is our stand-point to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Speech of Count Andrassy.

LES DÉCLARATIONS DU COMTE ANDRASSY.—La Commission des Affaires Etrangères de la Délégation Hongroise a eu Dimanche une séance dans laquelle le Comte Andrassy a donné des explications assez détaillées sur la politique du Cabinet de Vienne dans la question d'Orient. Répliquant aux observations critiques du Comte Szecsen, notre Ministre des Affaires Etrangères dit:—

Ce qui a surtout contribué à égarer l'opinion publique c'est la croyance que sa politique était indiquée dans les journaux soi-disant officieux; le seul journal dont il reconnaisse le caractère officieux c'est la "Wiener-Abendpost," et cela dans les communications faites sur autorisation spéciale.

Passant aux questions politiques le Comte Andrassy déclare avant tout qu'il est parfaitement d'accord avec le Comte Szecsen en ce qui concerne l'assertion de ce dernier que les Traités avaient beaucoup perdu de leur valeur. Il est évident qu'en Europe à côté des Traités il y a encore un autre facteur d'une importance décisive: la puissance; et que les Traités ne sont garantis qu'en tant qu'il est possible de les appuyer avec des forces suffisantes. Voulant remplir consciencieusement ses devoirs de Ministre sa préoccupation a donc été de maintenir intactes les forces de la Monarchie et de lui assurer aussi cette puissance et cette influence qui découlent des bonnes relations avec les Puissances amies. Ici le Comte Andrassy, parlant de l'alliance des trois Empereurs, aurait déclaré (en faisant observer que ce qu'il allait dire pouvait parfaitement être livré à la publicité):—"La Monarchie dispose de sa pleine et entière liberté d'action et il n'y a pas d'Etat en Europe qui puisse avoir à un plus haut degré que l'Autriche-Hongrie la certitude que ses intérêts légitimes et équitables ('mél lányos') seront sauvegardés en tout et partout."

A propos de quelques observations du Comte Szecsen concernant le Traité de Commerce avec la Roumanie, le Comte Andrassy s'étendit (en produisant quelques dépêches confidentielles qui ne paraîtront pas dans le Livre Rouge) sur la situation des petits Etats à nos frontières. Il ne faut pas, dit le Ministre, que les peuples Chrétiens en Orient restent plus longtemps imbus du préjugé comme si l'Autriche et la Hongrie ne se souciaient nullement de leur prospérité et de leur développement pacifique, comme si notre intérêt réclamait impérieusement le maintien de la Turquie dans l'état où elle était avant le mouvement actuel. "J'avoue," continue le Comte Andrassy, "que je n'aurais pas le courage de m'engager dans une entreprise qui aurait pour but de défendre dans ce sens le *statu quo* de la Turquie. Par 'défendre' je n'entends pas des paroles, mais des notes, et dans ce cas je demande s'il serait permis d'engager les forces de la Monarchie en vue d'un but, à la légitimité et à la réalisation duquel—je l'affirme hardiment—aucun homme d'Etat ne croit en Europe, pas même les hommes d'Etat Turcs." (Mouvement.)

M. le Ministre parle ensuite des symptômes de mouvement qui se sont manifestés depuis quelques années, et qui prouvent que ce mouvement était dans l'air et dans les circonstances, c'est pourquoi le Livre Rouge "rétrogradera de quelques années," et contiendra des épisodes qui jetteront du jour sur une situation dont le Sultan lui-même a dit qu'elle devait être l'objet d'une réforme radicale. On verra par là, a-t-il ajouté, que nous nous sommes abstenus de toute immixtion et que l'attitude que nous avons observé a été de la part de la Turquie l'objet de vifs remerciements.

L'orateur a combattu ensuite une opinion erronée fort répandue en Hongrie et suivant laquelle la Monarchie subit la pression d'une Puissance étrangère. L'Autriche-Hongrie

n'a ni la présomption ni le pouvoir de faire taire le canon en Europe, et nous ne cherchons nullement à exercer une suprématie absolue sur le Continent. Il n'y a en Europe aucune Puissance qui puisse faire quoi que ce soit sans le concours des autres. Un point certain, en outre, c'est que, sans nous, nulle Puissance ne saurait entreprendre de régler la question d'Orient. Notre situation tant géographique que militaire et politique est telle aujourd'hui que nous pouvons dire: "Nous sauvegarderons les intérêts Européens de concert avec l'Europe, mais quant à nos intérêts propres, c'est notre affaire et nous en répondons." Le Comte Szecsen ayant demandé quelles garanties M. le Ministre croit pouvoir indiquer quant à la sauvegarde de nos intérêts en dehors de la force matérielle, le Comte Andrassy a dit que les réponses faites à cet égard dans les deux Parlements à des interpellations analogues fournissent les plus rassurantes explications. Dans ces réponses, a-t-il ajouté, nous avons fait ressortir la franchise avec laquelle nous avons exposé nos intérêts quels qu'ils soient. Nous avons agi de même vis-à-vis des divers États, et il ne saurait subsister aucun doute touchant les points que nous avons indiqués comme constituant une violation de la sphère de nos intérêts. Si nous n'avons pas défini publiquement la nature de ces points, c'est parce que nous avons la conviction d'assurer plus efficacement la sauvegarde de nos intérêts en procédant avec discrétion. Il y a une autre façon d'agir, c'est vrai. On sait quels applaudissements ont accueilli dans la Chambre Française et dans le pays tout entier la déclaration faite à la tribune par le Gouvernement à la veille de la guerre Franco-Allemande. On sait aussi quelle en a été la conséquence. Mais il est une autre voie et c'est celle-ci: Définir les intérêts sans bruit, d'une façon qui n'éveille pas les susceptibilités et qui cependant engendre la conviction que ces assurances données avec tant de mesure seraient appuyées au besoin avec la plus grande énergie.

Vu l'heure avancée, les délibérations ont été suspendues. Les explications de M. le Ministre ont duré deux heures et ont été écoutées avec le plus vif intérêt. On a laissé à M. le Comte Andrassy le soin d'indiquer le moment de la reprise prochaine des discussions.

No. 220.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 688. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Vienna, December 15, 1877.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, reporting that Mr. Layard had been informed that Count Zichy had received instructions to state to the Porte that Austria-Hungary will not recognize the blockade of the Black Sea, I am assured by Baron Calice that he has never seen such an instruction, and that one could not have been sent to Constantinople without his knowledge. It may be presumed, therefore, that Mr. Layard's information on the subject is incorrect, though I have found that what has taken place in one Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is not always known in the others.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 221.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 689.)
My Lord,

Vienna, December 15, 1877.

THE fall of Plevna has been heard by the public here with painful feelings, which are in some degree modified by the hope that it may lead to a termination of the war.

At Prague and Agram the Slavs have celebrated the victory of Russia by illuminations and other public demonstrations of sympathy, but the Vienna newspapers appear to think at Prague to have been failures.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 222.

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 17.)

(No. 121.)
Sir,

Buda-Pesth, December 12, 1877.

THE meeting of the Delegations in Vienna and the consequent suspension of all but the absolutely necessary Parliamentary business here, have had the natural effect of concentrating public attention upon the foreign policy of the Imperial Government to the exclusion of every domestic topic. There is a general acquiescence in the expediency of passing the votes of credit, and of putting off to a future date the consideration of the Budget. But your Excellency will have had ample proof, in the course of your recent visits to Buda-Pesth, of the growing discontent with which Count Andrassy's conduct is regarded; and I think I may safely affirm that that discontent has been by no means lessened by his Excellency's recent speech to the Committee of the Hungarian Delegation.

Having been absent from Hungary for nearly two years, I cannot fail to be struck by the general change of language with respect to the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs. It is true that when I was last here, during the mysterious incubation of his famous Note, the possible drift of his Excellency's policy gave rise to apprehensions, which the moderation of that document eventually dissipated. But even during that period of anxiety, the Count's steadiest political opponents gave him credit for a certain independence of judgment, and for a limited, but possibly sufficient, amount of foresight. At the present moment it is not only his old opponents, but a large and increasing number of his former supporters who accuse him of sacrificing his own honour, and the interests of Hungary, to his desire to remain in office. The same accusations are levelled against M. Tisza and his colleagues in the Government; and there seems to be little doubt that a very large proportion of the Constituencies would, if they were polled to-morrow, return Representatives to the Lower House very far less pliant than the present majority.

I suppose that it is exasperation at their powerlessness to influence the Imperial policy, or even to extract from its responsible director any definite information as to its scope and intentions, which induces the malcontents to empty upon England also a not inconsiderable proportion of the vials of their wrath. I have been quite amazed at the unanimity with which all my old friends and acquaintances have assailed me on this point, and the impossibility of making them understand that they are not necessarily the best judges of the extent to which Russian success, so far as it has hitherto gone, is calculated to imperil the interests of the British Empire. So disgusted are they at the position now occupied by Austria-Hungary—by their dread of being dragged into some dismembering act of partition—by the possibility of their becoming accomplices in a spoliation fraught with eventual mischief to themselves—that they go the length of laying upon England the sole responsibility of their own *fainéantise*, which they persist in declaring that the slightest encouragement from London must have converted into a policy of action.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 223.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 455. Secret.)
My Lord,

Berlin, December 13, 1877.

I HAD the honour of dining at the Palace last night, and gathered from a conversation with the Emperor that His Majesty sees no prospect of peace yet, as Russia is bent on carrying on the war beyond the Balkans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 224.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 456. Confidential.)

Berlin, December 14, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 427, Secret, of the 12th instant, inclosing Mr. Layard's despatch No. 1376 and Colonel Wellesley's No. 28, on the subject of the prospects of the mediation of Germany between Russia and Turkey, I see as yet no symptoms on the part of the German Government to abandon the reserve they have hitherto observed in favour of a policy of mediation.

The soundings taken by the Porte through their Ambassador at Berlin, Sadoullah Bey, mentioned by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, have met with no encouragement, because the German Government, as I reported to your Lordship, does not wish to take any initiative in the matter.

The impression at Berlin is that Prince Bismarck would prefer Turkey and Russia to negotiate peace separately without the interference of the Powers, so as to save time; the terms agreed upon by the belligerents would then be submitted to the Guaranteeing Powers for their consideration.

I hear on good authority that the Porte has this very day renewed its request to the German Government to promote the mediation of the Powers in favour of peace, but I have not been able to see Herr von Bülow, so that I know no details.

My impression is that the Porte has this time appealed equally to all the Guaranteeing Powers, and that the German Government will reserve their answer until the other Powers have spoken.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 225.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 457. Confidential.)

Berlin, December 14, 1877.

My Lord,

IN his Excellency's despatch No. 1403 of the 26th ultimo, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople expresses his suspicion that it is the policy of Prince Reuss and his Government to push Greece into war with Turkey in order to assist Russia.

I need scarcely say that the German Government deny ever having encouraged Greece to go to war, and declare that Prince Reuss has been instructed to observe a strictly neutral policy.

I do believe, however, that Germany would be glad of the territorial aggrandizement of Greece, not as a means of assisting Russia, but as a step towards the civilization of the East.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 226.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 460.)

Berlin, December 15, 1877.

My Lord,

IN obedience to your Lordship's instruction of yesterday's date, I asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs what view the German Government took of the Turkish Circular of the 12th instant, asking Europe to interpose its good offices in favour of peace.

His Excellency told me that the Circular had been communicated to him yesterday by the Turkish Ambassador, and that he had told Sadoullah Bey that he would submit it to the Emperor forthwith, but that, faithful to the attitude hitherto observed, the German Government would wait to hear the opinion of the other Great Powers more directly concerned before coming to any decision, and would take no initiative in the matter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 227.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 25. Political.)

Corfu, December 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HEREWITH transmit, for your Lordship's information, copies of my most recent correspondence with Zante and Santa Maura on political matters.

2. The supply of cartridges alluded to in M. Onofrio's report arrived two days ago, and were transferred to the citadel. This, taken in connection with an order by telegram received last night by the officer commanding this garrison to "hold himself in readiness," certainly looks warlike.

3. The news of the fall of Plevna has caused considerable excitement throughout the islands—less in Cephalonia, as I am informed, than elsewhere—which I little expected would be the case.

4. I have it on credible authority that a band of brigands (so-called), numbering from fifteen to twenty, commanded by the Suliote Stuppa, has just appeared in the mountains between Suli and Prevesa. This Stuppa was associated with Generals Zavella and Grivas in the Epirus raid of 1854, and was the only Albanian of note who took part in that abortive expedition.

5. The mail steamer of the 11th instant brought us a military officer from Athens, who, since his arrival, has been making diligent inquiries after a chart of the Bay of Prevesa. The only reliable chart existing of this bay is Captain Mansell's, of Her Majesty's surveying ship "Hydra," and the only copy of it in these parts is one belonging to Mr. Taylor, who has been strongly importuned to lend it, but has peremptorily declined to do so.

6. From Albania I have no intelligence worth reporting, except that Abdi Tcherkess Pasha has been called away in great haste from Janina to take the command of the army operating against the Montenegrins in the direction of Antivari.

7. Abdi Pasha's removal so far from the Greek frontier at this moment may, under the present threatening aspect of affairs, turn out a measure involving very deplorable consequences.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 227.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Santa Maura, December 9, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that a Greek schooner arrived at Fort Alexander from Patras on Friday last, 7th instant, and landed 15 cases containing 1,200 "Gras" rifles and 2,000,000 rounds of cartridges, which have been stored in the fort of Santa Maura. Another schooner arrived at this port yesterday morning having on board 5,000,000 rounds of "Gras" cartridges, but I have been informed that she has been ordered to land this cargo at Corfu, whither she sailed last night.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANCIS ONOFRIO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 227.

Vice-Consul Stevens to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Zante, December 8, 1877.

Dear Sir Charles,

THE Countess Spiridion Roma invited a number of ladies on Thursday last to meet at her house for the purpose of communicating with them on subjects connected with their national interests.

The meeting was well attended. Madam Roma informed them that she had received letters from her sister, Madame Zaïmis, wife of the Minister, urging her to call upon the ladies of Zante to contribute money for the relief of sick and wounded soldiers in case of war. A Committee was formed and a subscription opened, which, from all I learn, is not likely to be very generous, the wealthiest among the ladies who met not having contri-

lated more than 25 drachmes. This has caused a certain sensation here; it is argued if the wife of a Minister applies to her friends for subsidies for sick and wounded soldiers she must know something more than the generality of people, and therefore war looks nearer than public opinion thought it was.

I know of nothing else worth repeating at present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. C. M. STEVENS.

No. 228.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, December 16, 1877.*
(Confidential.)

TURKISH Ambassador has just received the reply of the Emperor of Germany to the Sultan's telegram of the 12th instant.

His Majesty declines altogether to accede to Sultan's request for mediation.

No. 229.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17, 9·45 A.M.)

Rome, December 16, 1877, 11 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

Russian Ambassador told me to-day that he had telegraphed the Turkish despatch of the 12th instant to Prince Gortchakoff, but that he had heard nothing from him with reference thereto.

No. 230.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

Bucharest, December 17, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my telegram of Saturday, the report concerning Osman Pasha is not confirmed.

No. 231.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 553.) *Constantinople, December 17, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my telegram No. 551 of yesterday, I learn that the Porte has modified its Circular, and instead of declaring Prince Milan actually deposed, states that he is "en état de déchéance."

No. 232.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 554. Confidential.) *Constantinople, December 17, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

PORTE has learnt that Germany absolutely refuses to join with the Powers in an offer of mediation to Russia, and is very much discouraged. Should this attempt to put an end to the war fail, it is very probable that a direct appeal will be made to the Emperor of Russia, and Turkey will accept the best terms she can get without reference to the interests of any other Power. Prince Reuss has been doing his utmost to bring this about, and informed the Turkish Ministers from the first that the appeal to the Powers would be useless.

No. 233.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, December 17, 1877.*

I HAVE communicated to M. Tricoupi report contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 15th instant as to intentions of the Porte with regard to Crete, with a view that he should make use of it to prevent, if possible, an insurrection in that island.

No. 234.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 17, 1877, 2·5 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 550, Lord A. Loftus has been instructed to lose no time in communicating Sultan's request respecting Osman Pasha's body to Emperor of Russia.

No. 235.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 17, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

I HAVE received following from Mr. Layard:—

"The Sultan has just learnt, with great sorrow the death of Osman Pasha. The Porte would be greatly obliged to your Lordship if you would request Russian Government to allow the body to be sent to Constantinople. If this request be granted, the body should be delivered to Turkish authorities at Rustchuk."

Lose no time in communicating this request to Emperor of Russia.

No. 236.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 17, 1877, 3·45 P.M.*

PORTE telegraphs to Mukhtar Pasha that Mouktar Pasha reports that it is believed to be the intention of the Russian military authorities in Asia to send to Erzeroum the 5,000 or 6,000 Turkish wounded and sick now at Kars.

Porte protests on ground of hardships and danger to which their transport at this season of the year would expose them, and holds that it would be contrary to Article VI of Geneva Convention. They ask for good offices of the Powers.

You will call the attention of the Russian Government to this matter.

No. 237.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, December 17, 1877, 5·40 P.M.*

I FORWARD herewith a telegram from Monson, as it is possible that exaggerated reports may reach London respecting the public meeting held yesterday. I think it as well to state that it was discountenanced by all the leading personages here, and is generally considered a great mistake. Two windows were broken at the Premier's, but the police easily dispersed the mob.

No. 238.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, December 17, 1877, 6·15 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your despatch No. 1426 of the 30th ultimo, Law Officers have been consulted, and Her Majesty's Government cannot agree with opinion of Legal Advisers of Turkish Government.

The establishment of a blockade is an act of war, and in the case of the United States, referred to by Turkish Legal Advisers, the Governments of France and Great Britain considered that, by the blockade of the Confederate ports, the Southern States became belligerents.

The blockade, being an act of war, must be confined to those ports and parts of the coast which are in possession of the enemy.

You will accordingly ascertain and report to me what ports on the coast are in the hands of the Montenegrins.

Inform the Porte of the views of Her Majesty's Government.

No. 239.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 859.) *Foreign Office, December* 17, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE considered, in communication with the Law Officers of the Crown, your despatch No. 1425 of the 30th ultimo, inclosing a copy of the opinion of the Law Advisers of the Turkish Government upon which the Circular of the Porte notifying the blockade of the Albanian coast from Spizza to Duleigno was issued, and I have now to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government cannot agree in that opinion.

The establishment of a blockade is an act of war, and in the case of the United States, referred to by the Turkish Legal Advisers, the Governments of France and Great Britain considered that by the blockade of the Confederate ports the Southern States became belligerents.

The blockade, being an act of war, must be confined to those ports and parts of the coast which are in the possession of the enemy.

I have accordingly to request that you will ascertain, and report to me, what ports on the coast are in the hands of the Montenegrins, and you will further inform the Porte of the views held by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 240.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 105. Political.) *Bosna-Serai, December* 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, in view of war with Servia, the Turkish authorities are making every exertion to strengthen the military force on the Drina. The Spahis and auxiliary troops have been again called out, and a battalion of Redif from Banjaluka and another from Serajevo have marched for Svornik, whither the chief reinforcements are being directed, in consequence of the Servians having, as the Governor-General informs me, assembled a force of some 20,000 men in the vicinity of Loznica.

Mahzar Pasha also informs me that for the last fifteen days no insurgents have been seen along the western frontier of Bosnia, and he believes that they have withdrawn within the Austrian frontiers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 241.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha December 18.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 15 *Décembre*, 1877.

AINSI que je vous ai informé plus d'une fois, les Comités en Grèce continuent leur œuvre subversive et révolutionnaire au vu et au su du Gouvernement Helléniques. Photiades Bey vient de nous télégraphier que Hadji Michali est parti pour Crète avec 24 compagnons, 350 caisses de fusils, et 62 caisses de cartouches, et que les Capitaines G. Cylano, Maximos, Zographos, et Papa Yanakis s'apprêtent également à partir pour Rethimo avec 20 réfugiés Crétois et une quantité considérable d'armes. Dans un moment où tout conspire contre le Gouvernement Impérial et où notre territoire se trouve de tout côté en butte aux attaques de nos ennemis, nous nous demandons quelle est l'attitude qu'il y aurait lieu de tenir à l'égard de la Grèce, en présence des agissements et de l'agitation qui s'y manifestent.

Je prie votre Excellence de signaler ce qui précède à Lord Derby, et de nous faire connaître quelles sont ses vues et sa façon d'envisager la situation.

No. 242.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 18.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le* 15 *Décembre*, 1877.

LA Serbie vient de se mettre de nouveau en état d'hostilité ouverte avec la Sublime Porte. Je vous transmets ci-après la lettre que m'a remise M. Cristitch avant son départ de Constantinople, et me réserve de vous faire connaître incessamment la décision du Gouvernement Impérial :—

"Le Soussigné, Agent Diplomatique de la Principauté de Serbie auprès de la Sublime Porte, a l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de son Excellence Server Pacha.

"Le Protocole de Paix du 16 Février de la présente année avait stipulé une amnistie pleine et entière pour tous les gens compromis dans des événements antérieurs, le Gouvernement Princier n'avait pas hésité à faire rentrer dans leurs foyers un grand nombre de malheureux sujets Ottomans qui s'étaient réfugiés sur le territoire Serbe. Mais, en dépit de la teneur du susdit Protocole, ces réfugiés furent à leur retour continuellement exposés à de nouvelles persécutions et à de mauvais traitements de toute sorte, tant de la part de leurs concitoyens Musulmans que de celle des autorités Impériales elles-mêmes. Son Excellence Server Pacha a sans doute présentes à la mémoire les fréquentes réclamations que le Soussigné, d'ordre de son Gouvernement, a faites auprès de la Sublime Porte contre ces infractions manifestes à la Convention de Paix. Mais le Soussigné a le vif regret de constater que ses démarches n'ont pu avoir aucun résultat satisfaisant.

"D'autre part, le Gouvernement Princier a acquis la conviction que la Sublime Porte, contrairement aux lois internationales et sans tenir aucun compte des règles du bon voisinage, travaille, depuis quelque temps surtout, à compromettre la tranquillité et l'ordre intérieurs de la Principauté en prêtant un appui ouvert en armes et en d'autres moyens d'actions aux agissements de conspirateurs de dehors qui voudraient troubler la sécurité de la Principauté.

"Pour tous ces motifs, le Gouvernement Princier a cru devoir rappeler son Agent auprès de la Sublime Porte, et lui signifier l'ordre de quitter immédiatement Constantinople, la Principauté de Serbie se considérant désormais comme en état de guerre avec la Sublime Porte.

"Le Soussigné, &c.

(Signé) "Cristitch.

"*Constantinople, le* $\frac{5}{17}$ *Décembre*, 1877."

No. 243.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 350 ; (Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December* 18, 1877.

MEASURES for bringing a large portion of Suleiman Pasha's force from Eastern Bulgaria to Adrianople and the south side of the Balkans have already been commenced,

transports for the purpose having been sent to Varna. Sufficient troops will be left in the fortresses of the Quadrilateral to hold them. No news of any movements have been received here for some days.

Mahmoud Damat is gone to inspect fortifications at Adrianople, Sophia, and Balkan Passes. There is a report that he has gone to treat with Russians for peace, but I do not attach any importance to it.

No. 244.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 558.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 18, 1877.*

ACCORDING to a telegram received this morning by the Porte, Servians had crossed the frontiers, and were advancing in three columns on Sienitza, Novi-Bazar, and Nisch, their forces amounting to between 60 and 70 battalions.

No. 245.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 559. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 18, 1877.*

TELEGRAM from Turkish Ambassador at Berlin states that the Porte's appeal was submitted to the Emperor, who replied that, although desirous of peace, he could not depart from position of neutrality he had taken, and therefore could not comply with the Porte's request for mediation; but he hoped that it would not be inferred from this answer that he was not in favour of peace. M. de Bülow added confidentially that Prince Reuss had told Safvet Pasha some time ago that if Turkey wanted peace she should apply to Russia direct, as Germany would not mediate. If the advice of the Cabinet of Berlin was now asked, same advice would be given.

No. 246.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 560.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 18, 1877.*

CAPTAIN FIFE telegraphs following from Orchanie Pass, dated yesterday :—

"No fighting here since 3rd December except cannonade, now stopped by thick fogs; snow everywhere, and appearance of winter weather continuing."

No. 247.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, December 18, 1877.*

I HAVE communicated to Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs wish of the Porte conveyed to me in your telegram of yesterday to report death of Osman Pasha; but no confirmation of the report has been received here. Sultan's previous message has been received by Osman Pasha. I will telegraph his reply when received.

No. 248.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.) *Vienna, December 18, 1877.*

FROM the language held to me by Baron Orczy to-day, and by another person equally well informed respecting the proposed freedom of the Dardanelles to ships of war, I think that your Lordship may feel assured that no change has taken place in the policy

of Austria on this subject, and that Count Zichy, in expressing opinions upon it and on other points mentioned in a second telegram from Mr. Layard reported to me yesterday, can only reflect those of Prince Reuss.

I have seen very confidentially Count Andrassy's telegram to Count Beust. The question I put to him was not to initiate an idea, but to endeavour to ascertain precise meaning of the suggestions which he had himself made as to finding a satisfactory basis for a mediation.

No. 249.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Berlin, December 18, 1877.*

MY Turkish colleague tells me confidentially that Prince Bismarck wants Turkey to appeal directly to Russia for peace without the mediation of the Powers.

The Turkish Government will never do so, his Excellency says, because they know that by waiting until the Russian army threatens the Dardanelles and Constantinople, they are sure that England must come to rescue her own interests, which are also those of the Sultan.

No. 250.

Sir C. Wyke to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 18.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Copenhagen, December 18, 1877.*

I HAVE learnt in strictest confidence that the friendly relations between Austria and Russia are drawn closer daily, and that the former will not interfere with the latter's plans for concluding peace directly with the Porte, in virtue of the promises made by the Emperor of Russia to the Emperor of Austria when they last conferred together at Reichstadt, the fulfilment of which promises is guaranteed by Prince Bismarck.

Representatives of Germany and Austria are instructed to use all their influence at Constantinople to prevent leave being granted to English fleet to enter the Sea of Marmora.

Every reason to believe accuracy of this information.

No. 251.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 11. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 18, 1877.*

YOUR despatch No. 73, Political, of the 1st instant, has been received, in which you report the steps taken by you to induce the Christians of the Island of Crete to send delegates to Constantinople; and I have to convey to you my approval of your proceedings in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 252.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 1015.)
My Lord, *Paris, December 18, 1877.*

I HAD on the night of the 14th instant the honour to receive your Lordship's instruction to inquire what was the view taken by the French Government of the application of the Porte for the good offices of the neutral Powers towards putting an end to the war.

I spoke to M. Waddington the following morning on the subject, but having only just come into office, and not having yet had time to consult his colleagues, he was not able to

express on behalf of the French Government any official opinion on this important question.

He has told me this afternoon that all he can say at present is that France will take no kind of initiative in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 253.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19.)

Bucharest, December 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
FOLLOWING from Colonel Wellesley:—

"(Confidential.)

"Emperor returned to Russia yesterday. I took leave of His Majesty, and he promised to have the Sultan's messages conveyed to Osman Pasha.

"Emperor hoped that the fall of Plevna would lead to speedy peace, which would be welcomed by him provided that it be based on suitable conditions. His Majesty had, however, information that the Sultan wishes to ask for mediation, to which Emperor would not consent.

"He wished Sultan to apply direct to him, in which case he would be glad to come to terms with him, and then consult the opinions of his allies."

No. 254.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19.)

Bucharest, December 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
COLONEL WELLESLEY sends the following:—

"(Secret.)

"Russians will advance across the Balkans at once for Adrianople, but probably very slowly.

"Mobilization of two more army corps has just been ordered.

"Turks have abandoned Elena and reinforced the detachment at extremity of Hankoi Pass.

"Weather frosty and roads good when I left Bulgaria. Snow here."

No. 255.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19.)

(No. 561.) *Constantinople, December 18, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
FOLLOWING telegram has been received from Consul Green, dated to-day:—

"The coast-line from Cian (*sic*) on the Austrian frontier to Point Volovica (*sic*), on the south of the Bay of Antivari, is so far in the hands of the Montenegrins that when Turkish men-of-war approach it they come under fire of the Montenegrin batteries."

No. 256.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19.)

Belgrade, December 19, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)
EMPEROR ALEXANDER will certainly not throw over Prince Milan when peace is negotiated; and consequently, however reprehensible his conduct is, no doubt the advantage to be derived from proclaiming his deposition at present is extremely questionable. Internal resistance to his rule will not be aroused by it as long as Turkish troops do not occupy a portion of Servian territory, whilst Powers friendly to the Porte, such as Austria, continue to treat him as Prince, the moral effect of such a Proclamation will be lost.

No. 256 A.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 19, 1877, 10 A.M.*
HER Majesty's Government feel convinced that it would be hopeless to ask the Emperor of Russia to agree to an armistice of three months, and that such an attempt on their part would only weaken their influence in other respects.

The Cabinet are seriously considering the question of mediation.

No. 256 B.

Lord Tenterden to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 19, 1877, 2·50 P.M.*
PARLIAMENT is to meet on 17th January.

No. 256 C.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, December 19, 1877, 3·45 P.M.*
IN view of reports which are likely to be current here, it is desirable that you should be aware that the unusually early meeting of Parliament does not imply any intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to depart from the policy of conditional neutrality which they have announced.

No. 256 D.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 19, 1877, 6·55 P.M.*
WITH reference to your telegram No. 561 of 18th instant, press for a reply to inquiry of Her Majesty's Government as to what parts of the Albanian coast the Porte considers in the possession of hostile forces. Inform Porte that Her Majesty's Government will neither publish nor recognize the blockade until they are furnished by them officially with the information required.

No. 257.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 860.) *Foreign Office, December 19, 1877.*
Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 1439 of the 3rd instant has been received, reporting the resignation of Ahmed Vefyk Pasha; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have learnt with much regret of so ill-advised an appointment as that of Djemil Pasha to succeed him in the Valiship of Adrianople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 258.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 867. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, December 19, 1877.*
Sir,

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that Parliament is to meet on January 17, and, in view of the reports which are likely to be current in this country, Her Majesty's Government think it desirable that you should be aware that this unusually early meeting

of Parliament does not imply any intention on their part to depart from the policy of conditional neutrality which they have announced.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 259.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 868.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your telegram No. 561 of the 13th instant, in which you inform me that Consul Kirby Green reports that the coast between Clun, on the Austrian frontier, and Point Volovica, on the south of the Bay of Antivari, appears to be so far in the hands of the enemy that Turkish men-of-war approaching the coast come under the fire of the Montenegrin batteries; and I have to request that you will press the Porte for a reply to the inquiry I addressed to you in my despatch No. 856 of the 17th instant, as to what parts of the Albanian coast are in the possession of hostile forces.

You will state that Her Majesty's Government can neither publish nor recognize the blockade until the Porte furnishes them officially with the aforesaid information.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 260.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 113.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1877.

YOUR despatch No. 328, Confidential, of the 2nd instant has been received, in which you report the substance of two conversations which you have had with the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the subject of Crete, and the policy which Greece might, in certain eventualities adopt towards Turkey; and I have to state to you that the language which you held to M. Tricoupi is approved.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 261.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 114. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1877.

YOUR despatch No. 330, Confidential, of the 2nd instant has been received, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your having discouraged M. Tricoupi from adopting an aggressive policy against Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 262.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 115.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1877.

YOUR despatch No. 331 of the 4th instant has been received, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the manner in which you communicated to M. Tricoupi the reply of Her Majesty's Government to his inquiry as to the representation of Greece at a Conference, should one be convened.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 263.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(No. 82.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 164 of the 27th October, relative to the proposed punishment of the Persian Shehak tribe for outrages committed in the Province of Oromiah, and I have to convey to you my approval of your proceedings.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 264.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 135. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December* 8, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 118, Political, of the 17th ultimo, I have the honour to report that ten more Christians, who had been forced to join the corps of Bashi-Bazouks raised in the district of El Bassan, applied to me, on their arrival in Scutari, to obtain their discharge, on the ground that they had paid the tax for exemption from military service, and also that they were unapt in the use of arms.

On the first favourable opportunity I spoke to Rizah Pasha, the Chief of the Staff, who has under his control the distribution of all the forces in favour of these Christians. He, however, made me understand that the time had passed for the strict application of laws and rules, and that the State was in need of the personal services of all Christians and Mahommedans alike.

Seeing that I could not obtain the discharge of the Christians, I begged the Pasha to employ them in the military train; but here again I was met with a refusal, on the ground that the organization of this branch of the service was already completed.

I then asked Rizah Pasha, on the strength of the friendship existing between us, to seek himself some way of exempting these men from actual service before the enemy, and he, without holding out much hope of success, promised to do his best.

I have since been repeatedly spoken to on behalf of these men by the Greek Consul, to whom I have told all I have done. I have also promised him to lose no opportunity of furthering the wishes of the Christians, but I believe if I was to use too much insistence in my representations with the Turkish authorities, I might, instead of assisting the unhappy men, bring about unforeseen acts of severity and vengeance. The temper of the Mahommedans just at present is in no mood to bear quietly undue foreign pressure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 265.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 136. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December* 10, 1877.

OWING to the detention in Dalmatia until within the last few days of all the mails for Scutari since the appearance of the Montenegrins in the district of Antivari, I have only now been informed of a communication made by Colonel Thömmel, the Austro-Hungarian Political Agent in Montenegro, to Prince Nicholas, a short time before His Highness commenced his present military operations.

Colonel Thömmel announced to His Highness that the Imperial and Royal Government would oppose any attempt on the part of Montenegro to extend its territory in the direction of the Herzegovina beyond its present occupation of Nichsich, and with regard to any conquest of territory in Northern Albania, the Imperial and Royal Government reserved its right to discuss the expediency of an extension of Montenegro in that direction during the negotiations which would have to take place when peace is about to be concluded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 266.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 137. Political.)
My Lord,

Scutari, December 10, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, a table showing the armaments of the forts and block-houses in the district of Antivari which have been taken, or are being besieged by the Montenegrins.

Mr. Layard was, in August last, put in possession of the information I am now transmitting to your Lordship.

Although the Montenegrins announce that they have taken all the forts, with the exception of the Citadel of Antivari, the authorities here pretend to believe that Spizza and Nehai still hold out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 266.

ARMAMENTS of the Citadel of Antivari and of the other forts in the district of Antivari.

Name of Fort.	Number of Cannons.	Local Garrison.
Citadel of Antivari	6	50 artillerymen 150 Redifs of 3rd battalion of 3rd Regiment of 5th Army Corps. N.B.—Imposed since Montenegrin advance by a battalion of Mustafiz, 600 strong, withdrawn from the neighbouring village of Sustasch, and by about 2,000 irregulars.
Punta Volovica .. .. .. (Entrance of Antivari roadstead.)	4	20 artillerymen.
Landing-place	—	42 Redifs of above battalion.
Spizza and Golo B'rdo	3	42 artillerymen. 78 Redifs. 17 Hududich (frontier guards).
Nehai	5	30 artillerymen. 40 Redifs.
Saterman	1	6 artillerymen. 200 Redifs.
Zerni-Kom	1	2 artillerymen. 30 Redifs.
Kula Ghergurisa	—	30 Hududich.
Cian Limani	—	33 *idem.*
Kula Liubin	—	30 Redifs.
Kula Ribniach	—	30 *idem.*

No. 267.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 345.)
My Lord,

Athens, December 13, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that much anxiety has been caused here by a telegram received at Athens yesterday from Vienna, through the Havas Agency, setting forth the probable conditions of peace, and in which no allusion is made to Greece, and that the Hellenic Government may be obliged by popular opinion to adopt an adventurous policy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 268.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 346. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Athens, December 13, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I called upon M. Tricoupi this morning, and that I observed to him that, judging by what I had heard lately as to public feeling, there seemed to be a good deal of uneasiness and anxiety at the course events were taking in Turkey, and at the rumoured conditions of peace, copy of which I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship. M. Tricoupi said that such was the case, and that it was impossible to say what policy the public feeling of the country might now dictate, that it appeared as if Hellenic interests were to be completely neglected, and that he thought that even if a Greek force invaded Thessaly and Epirus, and was beaten, Greece would be better off than if she continued to maintain a pacific attitude, as by taking an active part in the war she would probably become entitled to a consideration of her claims in the settlement of the Eastern question.

He also said that the large immigration of Mussulmans from the Slavonic provinces of the Turkish Empire was threatening to extinguish the Hellenic element in the southern provinces of Turkey. I remarked to him that this was the result of the war now being carried on by Russia, who was driving the Mussulmans from their homes, that they must fly somewhere, and that he could not expect them to be swept off the face of the earth. He said Russia was carrying out a policy which was in her interest and in accordance with her duty, viz., of rescuing the Slavs from the Turkish yoke, and he spoke with much bitterness of the policy of England, and of the advice which she had given to Greece to maintain a pacific attitude. I pointed out to him that Her Majesty's Government had been adverse to the war from the first, that it was certainly not the fault of England that a Mussulman population was pouring into provinces of the Turkish Empire inhabited by Greeks, but that that was the result of the war carried on by Russia. Mr. Stuart, in his despatch No. 85 of the 15th May last, called your Lordship's attention to this question.

I also observed to M. Tricoupi that an invasion by Greece of the neighbouring Turkish provinces would probably bring about the massacre of the Christians there, and would entail intense misery upon the population. He replied that he did not think the misery could become much greater than it was already, and that he had certain information of the destruction already of fifteen villages, I think he said, in the province of Thessaly.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 268.

Extract from the "Agence Havas."

Vienne, le 11 Décembre, 1877, 11 h. s.

ON assure que les conditions de la paix, approuvées par l'Allemagne et l'Autriche, seraient de laisser libre le passage des Dardanelles, de céder l'Arménie à la Russie, de proclamer l'indépendance de la Bulgarie, gouvernée sous un Prince n'appartenant pas à la famille Impériale Russe, de reconnaître l'indépendance de la Roumanie et de la Serbie, et d'accorder un agrandissement de territoire au Monténégro.

L'annexion à l'Autriche de la Bosnie et de l'Herzégovine est considérée comme certaine.

(Signé) G. ZIVANOPOULE.

No. 269.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 347. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Athens, December 13, 1877.

WITH reference to my No. 346, Confidential, of to-day's date, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that M. Tricoupi, in talking of the reported conditions of peace

published, it appears, in the "Cologne Gazette," and which reached Athens yesterday by telegraph, said that it would be quite in accordance with the policy of Russia to omit Greece from all consideration, as a "punishment" for not having taken part in the war; that she would like Greece to join in it, as an aggressive policy on the part of Greece at the present moment would, he said, be of the greatest assistance to her.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 270.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 348. Confidential.)
Athens, December 13, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 328 of the 2nd instant, reporting the substance of conversations with M. Tricoupi, I have the honour to report that the first conversation I held with M. Tricoupi was on the 30th ultimo, that I wrote down a summary of the principal points he had touched upon, and that I called upon him the following day with my notes, which I showed to him, and asked him if they were correct, and that he made various alterations, which I wrote down at his dictation.

I had written down the following as to what he had said with regard to Austria and Italy:—

"I asked M. Tricoupi if any understanding had been come to between Austria, Italy, and Greece; and he said no, not a complete understanding." When I read this to him he first altered it to "not a formal understanding," and then changed it to a complete negative.

I then continued from my notes:—"But, I asked, has there been an interchange of ideas on this point, and he replied in the affirmative, but he said in a strictly unofficial manner."

M. Tricoupi, after begging me to erase the words "in the affirmative," altered the sentence after the word "replied," as follows:—

"That whatever had passed had been treated entirely in an indirect manner, and was strictly unofficial."

I of course inferred from this, that although he erased the words "in the affirmative," that I had rightly understood him to mean that an unofficial interchange of ideas had taken place between the Governments in question and that of Greece; but I questioned him again to-day on the subject, and he said that no communication had taken place on the question to which he referred between the members of the respective Governments in question, or between their agents; that his information was gathered from reports that had reached him, and that his remarks as to the possible policy of Italy were especially based upon surmises formed from reports he had received.

I am afraid your Lordship may think that I have sent an incorrect report to your Lordship, and I therefore beg to state that, being particularly anxious to give an accurate account of M. Tricoupi's conversation, I made the notes to which I have alluded, and I believe correct notes of what he had said to me on the 30th ultimo; that on the first instant M. Tricoupi modified the wording of those notes, and that he has to-day given me the further explanations I have the honour now to lay before your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 271.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 20.)

My Lord,
Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 19 Décembre, 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence que le Patriarcat Œcuménique à Constantinople, ayant appris que le Gouvernement des Principautés-Unies s'occupe de négocier un emprunt moyennant hypothèque des biens sis en Moldo-Valachie, connus sous le nom de "biens dédiés" et appartenant aux Saints Lieux d'Orient, vient d'adresser à la Sublime Porte une protestation contre cette violation de ses droits de propriété par le Gouvernement Moldo-Valaque.

Les circonstances actuelles mettant obstacle à ce que la dite protestation soit envoyée

par la Sublime Porte directement à Bucharest, je viens, d'ordre de mon Gouvernement, en remettre par la présente note une copie à votre Excellence, ainsi qu'une copie de ses annexes, et j'ai en même temps l'honneur d'informer votre Excellence que cette communication a pour but de suppléer à la notification qui aurait dû être faite au Gouvernement des Principautés-Unies.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 271.

The Œcumenical Patriarchat at Constantinople to Server Pasha.

Fanary, le 18/30 Novembre, 1877.

NOUS apprenons avec une surprise douloureuse que le Gouvernement Roumain, continuant la série si longue d'actes violents et iniques commis au préjudice d'une propriété étrangère et sacrée, est en train de négocier la conclusion d'un emprunt sur hypothèque des biens, sis en Moldavie et en Valachie, connus sous le nom des "biens dédiés," et appartenant aux Saints Lieux d'Orient.

En l'an 1868, le Gouvernement Roumain se proposant, pour faire face à des besoins d'un ordre inférieur et privé, de procéder à la vente de tous les biens ecclésiastiques dont le revenu annuel ne serait pas inférieur à la somme de 6,000 francs, et comprenant dans cette mesure les biens sous mentionnés des saints lieux, les signataires de cette pièce ne manquèrent pas de protester solennellement contre l'arbitraire de cet acte de spoliation fait au mépris de la justice et des Conventions internationales du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1864, signé par les Grandes Puissances.

Ils ne firent pas également faute de protester officiellement par devant la Sublime Porte et par devant les Représentants des Grandes Puissances, lorsque dans le courant de l'année 1871 la Chambre des Députés de Bukarest fut saisie d'un Projet de Loi tendant à autoriser le Gouvernement Roumain à hypothéquer ou à vendre une grande partie des biens ecclésiastiques, pour se procurer l'argent dont il avait besoin, et qu'ils virent figurer parmi ces biens les domaines principaux des "biens dédiés." Malheureusement les protestations réitérées des propriétaires spoliés ne purent point arrêter le Gouvernement Roumain dans sa décision fatale de violer les droits les plus sacrés de la propriété. Les Soussignés voyant avec regret cette nouvelle atteinte et violation contre la propriété des saints lieux, et afin d'empêcher que cette fois on ne puisse tirer non plus de leur silence aucune induction à leur détriment, réservent expressément tous leurs droits et se référant aux protestations par eux faites précédemment contre le Gouvernement Roumain, et particulièrement à celle du 25 Septembre, 1868, et à celle de 12/24 Avril, 1871, dont copies ci-jointes, protestations qu'ils réitèrent et maintiennent dans toute leur force et teneur, protestent derechef, en premier lieu, contre le Gouvernement Roumain, et déclarent la mise en hypothèque des biens dits "dédiés" et leurs ventes, ainsi que toutes aliénations quelconques que le Gouvernement Roumain serait tenté d'effectuer sur ces mêmes biens, nulles et de nul effet, les inscriptions hypothécaires et les enchères et adjudications des sus-dits biens entachés de violence et d'illégalité dans leur ensemble et dans toutes leurs parties, les employés et fonctionnaires qui prêteront leur ministère à ces mêmes inscriptions ou adjudications coupables de stellionat public;

Ils protestent, en second lieu, contre les soi-disant prêteurs sur hypothèque ou adjudicataires de ces mêmes biens, et déclarent l'acceptation d'hypothèque et l'acquisition de ces biens nulle et de nul effet. Ils signifient à tous ces prétendus créanciers hypothécaires ou acquéreurs, et à chacun d'eux, qu'ils seront considérés comme détenteurs de mauvaise foi et complices de stellionat; ajoutant que cette détention sera inefficace pour toutes fins de droit, que les versements qu'ils pourront faire seront non valables; qu'ils seront notamment incapables de faire acquérir aucuns droits à ceux à qui ils pourraient transmettre par la suite ces détentions notoirement vicieuse dans laquelle ils ne sont maintenus que par la force armée.

En outre, ils constituent le Gouvernement Roumain et les soi-disant créanciers sur hypothèque ou acquéreurs, et ce sans bénéfice de minorité, de totalité, ou autre exception quelconque, solidairement responsables de tous dommages-intérêts résultant de ces prétendus hypothèques et ventes, dommages-intérêts qu'ils sont d'ailleurs dans l'impossibilité de préciser actuellement, vu l'immensité du tort qui leur est causé.

En conséquence, les Soussignés, vu l'impossibilité dans laquelle ils se trouvent de donner à leurs protestations ci-dessus formulées une suite légale aussi bien contre l'administration des Principautés-Unies que contre les soi-disant acquéreurs ou prêteurs sur

hypothèque des dits biens, portent ces mêmes protestations devant la Sublime Porte et les Hautes Puissances co-signataires du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1864, auxquelles il appartient de faire respecter les stipulations internationales qui ont placé les propriétés des Saints Lieux d'Orient sous la sauvegarde de leur honneur.

Les Soussignés prient votre Excellence de vouloir bien transmettre une copie de cette protestation à chaque Représentant des Grandes Puissances co-signataires du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1864.

(Signé) JOACHIM, *Patriarche Œcuménique* (sceau), *Vicaire du Patriarche de Jerusalem à Constantinople.*
PORPHILOS, *Archimandrite* (sceau), *Vicaire du Mont Sinai.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 271.

Protest of the Heads of the Holy Places of the Eastern Church.

Fanary, le 25 Septembre, 1868.

LES Soussignés viennent d'être informés, par des publications officielles contenues dans le "Moniteur" de Bukarest, que le Gouvernement de Son Altesse le Prince Charles de Roumanie se dispose à aliéner par vente perpétuelle un grand nombre de terres, vignes et édifices appartenant, dans les Principautés-Unies, aux Saints Lieux d'Orient, pour en assigner le produit de la vente à l'extinction des dettes dont le fisc des Principautés se trouve actuellement grévé.

Ce procédé du Gouvernement Roumain, d'autant plus surprenant qu'il a lieu à la suite d'assurances réitérées et formelles que Son Altesse le Prince Charles a, depuis son avénement, données aux Chefs de l'Eglise d'Orient de son désir de vider, à l'amiable et par une entente directe, les contestations qui tiennent en suspens la solution de la question éventuelle, constitue évidemment non-seulement la violation la plus coupable de la propriété d'autrui, mais encore la plus manifeste infraction aux stipulations internationales du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1864, par lequel les Hautes Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris ont garanti la conservation des biens dédiés et de leurs revenus, en stipulant expressément "qu'aucun acte d'aliénation de ces propriétés ne doit être opéré, et que la conservation des revenus doit être assurée jusqu'à l'entière conclusion du débat."

En présence d'un pareil état de choses,

Attendu que les Saints Lieux d'Orient sont seuls propriétaires des immeubles sis en Roumanie et connus sous la dénomination des biens dédiés; que cette propriété est placée sous la sauvegarde du droit civil et du droit international: du droit civil en ce que les titres de cette propriété, conformes à une possession séculaire, n'ont jamais été contestés devant les Tribunaux compétents; du droit international, en ce que les Hautes Puissances signataires du Protocole sus-mentionné ont garanti la conservation des biens conventuels et de leurs revenus;

Attendu que devant un droit si bien établi, les actes de violence auxquels le Gouvernement Roumain s'est livré contre ces mêmes propriétés ne sauraient avoir aucune valeur juridique; que les dispositions législatives par lesquelles le Gouvernement Roumain a prétendu légaliser sa spoliation ont été déclarées par le dit Protocole comme non avenues; que dès lors l'Administration Roumaine n'a sur les susdites biens qu'une détention entachée de violence permanente; que par conséquent les enchères et adjudications annoncées par le "Moniteur Roumain," si elles venaient à se réaliser, ne sauraient avoir aucune portée légale; que les soi-disant acquéreurs des sus-dits biens ne sauraient être considérés que comme des détenteurs de mauvaise foi en collusion avec un prétendu vendeur s'efforçant de faire croire à une transmission de droits réels sur les dits biens;

Pour ces motifs, les Saints Lieux d'Orient, afin d'empêcher que cette fois non plus on ne puisse tirer de leur silence aucune induction à leur détriment, réservent expressément tous leurs droits, et après avoir rappelé les protestations par eux faites précédemment contre le Gouvernement Roumain, protestations qu'ils réitèrent et maintiennent dans toute leur force et teneur, protestent derechef, en premier lieu, contre le Gouvernement Roumain et déclarent les ventes des biens dédiés, annoncées dans le "Moniteur de Bukarest," ainsi que toutes aliénations quelconques que le Gouvernement Roumain serait tenté d'effectuer sur ces mêmes biens, nulles et de nul effet, les enchères et adjudications des sus-dits biens entachées de violence et d'illégalité dans leur ensemble et dans toutes leurs parties, les employés et fonctionnaires qui prêteront leur ministère à ces mêmes adjudications comptables de stellionat public. Ils protestent en second lieu contre les soi-disant adjudicataires

de ces mêmes biens et déclarent l'acquisition de ces biens nulle et de nul effet; ils signifient à tous ces prétendus acquéreurs et à chacun d'eux qu'ils seront considérés comme détenteurs de mauvaise foi et complices de stellionat; ajoutant que cette détention sera inefficace pour toute fin de droit, que les paiements qu'ils pourront faire seront non-valables, qu'ils seront notamment incapables de faire acquérir aucuns droits à ceux à qu'ils pourraient transmettre par la suite de cette détention notoirement vicieuse, dans laquelle ils ne sont maintenus que par la force armée.

En outre, ils constituent le Gouvernement Roumain et les soi-disant acquéreurs, et ce sans bénéfice de minorité, de totalités, ou autres exceptions quelconques, solidairement responsables de tous dommages-intérêts, qu'ils sont d'ailleurs dans l'impossibilité de préciser actuellement, vu l'immensité du tort qui leur est causé.

En conséquence, les Soussignés, vu l'impossibilité dans laquelle ils se trouvent de donner à leurs protestations ci-dessus formulées une suite légale aussi bien contre l'Administration Roumaine que contre les soi-disant acquéreurs éventuels des biens dédiés, portent ces mêmes protestations devant la Sublime Porte et les Hautes Puissances garantes, signataires du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1864, auxquelles il appartient de faire respecter les stipulations internationales qui ont placé les propriétés des Saints Lieux d'Orient sous la sauvegarde de leur honneur.

Inclosure 3 in No. 271.

Second Protest of the Heads of the Holy Places of the Eastern Church.

Fanary, le 12 Avril, 1871.

L'ASSEMBLÉE des Députés à Bukarest vient d'être saisie d'un projet de loi qui autorise le Gouvernement Roumain d'hypothéquer et d'aliéner une partie considérable des terres ecclésiastiques afin de se procurer les moyens de combler le déficit de son budget pour l'année courante. Au nombre des terres désignées pour ce sacrifice, les Soussignés ont vu, avec la plus pénible surprise, figurer les terres les plus considérables parmi celles qui appartiennent, tant en Moldavie qu'en Valachie, aux Saints Lieux d'Orient.

Déjà en l'année 1868, lorsque le Gouvernement Roumain se disposait à mettre en vente pour pareil motif les biens ecclésiastiques rapportant moins de 6,000 fr. annuellement, et qu'il y comprenait des biens des Saints Lieux d'Orient, les Soussignés ont solennellement protesté contre ce procédé arbitraire, par lequel le Gouvernement Roumain non-seulement commettait un acte de stellionat patent, mais encore il foulait aux pieds les stipulations internationales établies entre les Grandes Puissances par le Protocole du 29 Mai, 1874, à l'égard des biens dédiés. Les protestations des Saints Lieux n'ont pas arrêté le Gouvernement Roumain dans sa marche fatale. Avide de se faire de l'argent par tous les moyens, ce Gouvernement passa outre sur toutes les considérations, tout en laissant entrevoir aux consciences révoltées et aux acquéreurs qu'éloignaient des enchères la crainte de Dieu ou l'appréhension des suites légales de leur complicité au stellionat gouvernemental la facilité d'une réparation par la substitution de quelques grandes terres de son propre domaine à la place des nombreuses petites propriétés des Saints Lieux qu'on aliénait.

Aussi continua-t-il depuis 1868 de dissiper sensiblement le fonds des propriétés des Saints Lieux d'Orient, de même que depuis 1863 il ne cesse de dissiper la totalité des revenus de ces propriétés, oubliant que la conservation de ces revenus se trouve assurée par la garantie des Hautes Puissances signataires du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1864, qui lui demanderont compte le jour où la question des monastères pendante devra être prise en mains. Ces revenus accumulés dans l'espace des huit années écoulées représentent aujourd'hui la somme énorme de 80,000,000 fr. en dehors de 10,000,000 fr. ou 12,000,000 fr. qui incombent aux Saints Lieux pour cinq annuités de capital qui leur revient du chef de l'indemnité des paysans. Ils seront bien embarrassés de restituer aux Saints Lieux propriétaires cette somme les hommes qui ont osé la dissiper puisque, pour satisfaire aux exigences du budget ordinaire du pays, ils se disent contraints de recourir à l'aliénation du fonds même des immeubles usurpés à l'Eglise.

Telle est la situation que le Gouvernement Roumain cherche à aggraver davantage en se prenant actuellement aux grandes propriétés des Saints Lieux afin que l'on ne trouve, autour de ce Gouvernement qu'une ruine complète le jour où justice sera faite aux spoliés.

En présence de cette nouvelle violation, projetée par le Gouvernement Roumain contre la propriété des Saints Lieux d'Orient, les Soussignés, obéissant à la voix de leur devoir, s'empressent de renouveler les protestations qu'ils ont faites le 25 Septembre, 1868,

et attendu que les Saints Lieux d'Orient sont seuls propriétaires des immeubles sis en Roumanie et connus sous la dénomination de biens dédiés, que cette propriété est placée sous la sauvegarde du droit civil et du droit international: du droit civil, en ce que les titres de cette propriété, conformes à une possession séculaire, n'ont jamais été constaté devant les Tribunaux compétents; du droit international, en ce que les Hautes Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris ont garanti la conservation des biens dédiés et de leurs revenus en stipulant expressément par le Protocole du 29 Mai, 1861, qu'aucun acte d'aliénation de ces propriétés ne doit être opéré, et que la conservation des revenus doit être assurée jusqu'à l'entière conclusion de débat, attendu que devant un droit si bien établi les actes de violence auxquels le Gouvernement Roumain s'est livré contre ces mêmes propriétés ne sauraient avoir aucune valeur juridique, que les dispositions législatives par lesquelles le Gouvernement Roumain a prétendu légaliser sa spoliation ont été déclarées par le dit Protocole comme non-avenues, que, dès lors, l'Administration Roumaine n'a sur les dits biens qu'une détention entachée de violence permanente; que, par conséquent, les inscriptions hypothécaires près les Tribunaux, ainsi que les enchères et adjudications des biens dédiés, ne sauraient avoir aucune portée légale; que les soi-disant créanciers hypothécaires ou acquéreurs des susdits biens ne sauraient être considérés que comme les détenteurs de mauvaise foi en collusion avec un prétendu emprunteur hypothécaire ou vendeur s'efforçant de faire croire à une hypothèque ou à une transmission des droits réels sur les susdits biens.

Pour ces motifs, les Saints Lieux d'Orient, afin d'empêcher que cette fois non plus on ne puisse tirer de leur silence aucune induction à leur détriment, réservent expressément tous leurs droits, et après avoir rappelé les protestations par eux faites précédemment contre le Gouvernement Roumain, et particulièrement celle du 25 Septembre, 1868, protestations qu'ils réitèrent et maintiennent dans toute leur force et teneur, protestent derechef en premier lieu contre le Gouvernement Roumain, et déclarent la mise en hypothèque des biens dits dédiés et leur vente, ainsi que toutes aliénations quelconques que le Gouvernement Roumain serait tenté d'effectuer sur ces mêmes biens, nulles et de nul effet, les inscriptions hypothécaires et les enchères et adjudications des susdits biens entachées de violence et d'illégalité dans leur ensemble et dans toutes leurs parties, les employés et fonctionnaires qui prêteront leur ministère à ces mêmes inscriptions ou adjudications coupables de stellionat public. Ils protestent en second lieu contre les soi-disant prêteurs sur hypothèque ou adjudicataires de ces mêmes biens, et déclarent l'acceptation d'hypothèque et l'acquisition de ces biens nulles et de nul effet; ils signifient à tous ces acquéreurs et à chacun d'eux qu'ils seront considérés comme détenteurs de mauvaise foi et complices de stellionat, ajoutant que cette détention sera inefficace pour toutes fins de droit, que les versements qu'ils pourront faire seront non valables, qu'ils seront notamment incapables de faire acquérir aucuns droits à ceux à qui ils pourraient transmettre par la suite cette détention notoirement vicieuse dans laquelle ils ne sont maintenus que par la force armée.

En outre ils constituent le Gouvernement Roumain et les soi-disant créanciers sur hypothèque ou acquéreurs, et ce sans bénéfice de minorité, de totalité, ou autre exception quelconque, solidairement responsables de tous dommages-intérêts, qu'ils sont d'ailleurs dans l'impossibilité de préciser actuellement, vu l'immensité du tort qui leur est causé. En conséquence, les Soussignés, vu l'impossibilité dans laquelle ils se trouvent de donner à leurs protestations ci-dessus formulées une suite légale, aussi bien contre l'Administration des Principautés-Unies que contre les soi-disant acquéreurs ou prêteurs sur hypothèque des dits biens, portent ces mêmes protestations devant la Sublime Porte et les Hautes Puissances co-signataires du Protocole du 29 Mai, 1861, auxquelles il appartient de faire respecter les stipulations internationales qui ont placé les propriétés des Saints Lieux d'Orient sous la sauvegarde de leur honneur.

No. 272.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 20.)

(No. 562.) *Constantinople, December* 19, 1877, 5 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received following telegram from General Kemball, dated this morning:—

"Mukhtar Pasha declares Russians between Erzeroum and Soghanlee Dagh reduced to forty battalions, and thinks (they) cannot attack Erzeroum. Having secured defence of town, he is organizing forces at Bibiut and Erzinglan.

No. 273.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 20.)

(No. 563.) *Constantinople, December* 19, 1877, 11·30 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)

7 (50,000) troops, including five batteries of artillery, two regiments of cavalry, and 1,200 horses from Suleiman Pasha's army crossed the Balkans and were forwarded to Tatar-Bazardjik on the 19th. 9,000 more arrived here by sea to-day, and 9,000 more are expected. These will go to the same place at once.

No. 274.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, December* 20, 1877.

M. GIERS informs me that Osman Pasha, whose wound is not dangerous, left head-quarters for Russia attended by his doctor on the 17th instant, and that before leaving he sent telegrams to the Seraskeriat and his family.

No. 275.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1457.) *Constantinople, December* 8, 1877.

My Lord,

CONSUL READE, in his despatch to me from Varna of the 30th ultimo, of which he transmitted a copy to your Lordship, relates the circumstances under which a Bulgarian named Dragich Nikolchu Raduch appears to have been unjustly condemned to death and executed. I had a translation made of Mr. Reade's despatch, and sent it to the Grand Vizier, with a private note to the effect that although the case was one in which I had no right to interfere officially, I could not, as a friend, refrain from bringing it to his notice, and expressing my conviction that he would lose no time in directing full inquiries to be made on the spot with regard to it, and, if the facts were such as stated, that he would visit with condign punishment those who had brought about the death of this unfortunate man, and had pronounced an unjust judgment upon him. His Highness promised Mr. Sandison, whom I also instructed to speak to him on the subject, that he should communicate with the authorities of Varna at once with respect to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 276.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1458.) *Constantinople, December* 7, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Sultan placed in my hands yesterday a telegram from Kerim Pasha, commanding the Turkish forces at Osman Bazar, which states that on the 1st December four Mussulmans, with thirty women and children, having left Tirnova, had arrived at the village of Yayln, his head-quarters. Amongst these refugees is one Moula Osman, a native of Kiza Pinar, who made the following statement:—

Having left Nevreli ten days ago, he arrived at Tirnova. After remaining for six days in this place, he managed the night before last to effect his escape to Yayla. The villagers of Dobromir, who had been obliged to transport provisions to the Russian camp at Plevna, related to him on their return that the enemy had suffered enormous loss. The dwellings abandoned by the Mussulmans, as well as all the mosques of the villages in the neighbourhood of Tirnova, have been burnt or destroyed by the Russians. The Imam of the village of Kechanbiol, with his son, as well as the inhabitants of some other villages, have been massacred. Their corpses strew the way. Some Mussulman women have been violated.

This telegram has now been published in the Turkish newspapers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 277.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1469.) *Constantinople, December* 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose an account published in the local newspapers of a meeting of the General Assembly of the Armenian community, held yesterday under the presidence of the Patriarch, at which it was unanimously decided that, in answer to the appeal from the Sultan, the Armenians should enrol themselves in the new Civic Guard for the defence of the country.

I am assured by an Armenian gentleman who enjoys the confidence of the Patriarch that his Holiness and his people warmly approve of the measure taken by the Porte to call the Christian subjects of the Sultan to military service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 277.

Newspaper Extract.

HIER a eu lieu une Assemblée Générale des Arméniens, à l'effet de prendre connoissance du teskéré de la Sublime Porte relatif à l'enrôlement des Chrétiens dans la Garde Civique. Après la lecture de ce document plusieurs orateurs ont pris tour à tour la parole pour faire ressortir la nécessité d'une mesure qui ne tend à rien moins qu'à asseoir la plus parfaite égalité entre tous les sujets Ottomans, sur la base de la Constitution octroyée par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

La solennité était imposante; tous les députés, au nombre de 120, avaient pris part à l'Assemblée, dont la présidence avait été offerte à Monseigneur Narsès, Patriarche des Arméniens, qui, quoique souffrante, avait tenu à y assister.

Plus de 5,000 personnes avaient pris place autour des députés.

L'Assemblée a décidé à l'unanimité de répondre au teskéré par des remercîments au Gouvernement Impérial à l'occasion d'une mesure qui répond pleinement aux vœux exprimés plusieurs fois par les Arméniens. Il a été également décidé de confier l'exécution de cette mesure à une Commission composée de laïques et d'ecclésiastiques.

A la suite des délibérations et du vote de l'Assemblée, Monseigneur Narsès a fait des prières pour la conservation des jours précieux de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et de ses Ministres. L'assistance a répondu par des vivats et s'est retirée dans le plus grand ordre.

No. 278.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1468.) *Constantinople, December* 11, 1877.

My Lord,

RAOUF PASHA, who is still Minister of Marine, although he has been long away from the capital in military command, has now been, in addition, named Minister of War *ad interim*. Mustapha Phosphor Pasha leaves his post of Acting War Minister, which he was very incompetent to fulfil, for the command-in-chief of the Civic Guard

The Vali of Salonica, Nusret Pasha, of whom I have received constant complaints from Consul Barker, has been recalled. He is replaced by Ibrahim Pasha, recently Governor-General of the province of Adrianople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 279.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1469.) *Constantinople, December* 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Prevesa respecting the state of affairs in his district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 279.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Layard.

Prevesa, December 1, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint your Excellency that detachments of Bashi-Bazouks continue to arrive, and that about 200 of them are already at Prevesa. I am informed, however, by good source, that more are expected here, as it is intended to increase the number to 500.

About 250 Christian irregulars from Radovizi and Zumerico have been sent to Arta, but I hear that they are to retain their own guns (Albanian), which would seem to imply that the authorities do not intend to supply them with breechloaders.

The whole of the irregulars raised at Constantinople, and destined for Epiras, are now at Janina, besides 350 Albanians, under the command of Safuli Bey, who arrived there within the last few days, making a total of 1,050 men, but the other body of Albanians (about 200), commanded by Liaz Agha, whose arrival at Janina was mentioned in Mr. Kyprioti's despatch, copy and translation of which was inclosed in my despatch of the 17th ultimo, has been sent to Thessaly, and the rumour is current at Janina that another batch of Albanian irregulars, 450 strong, under the leadership of Dalian Bey, has also been dispatched to Thessaly, viâ Conitza.

It appears that instructions were received here the other day from Constantinople to demolish the redoubt recently constructed at Punta, opposite Prevesa, but I regret I cannot state just at present how far these instructions have been carried out.

While writing the above, information reached me that a telegram from Ali Pasha at Arta reached the authorities during last night to dispatch a body of troops to Laccopula, a village near Sulli, as the brigand Chief Stupas, with a body of men, had made his appearance in that quarter. Consequently two companies of Redifs from our garrison left for that village, and I am told that four more companies of Redifs from Arta have also gone in that direction.

A Turkish iron-clad, I hear, is expected in these waters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

No. 280.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1470.) *Constantinople, December* 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to enclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Adrianople, forwarding one from the British Vice Consul at Dédéaghatch, respecting the condition of that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 280.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, November 20, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a report, of the 13th instant, from Mr. Vice-Consul Willshire, upon the condition of the district of Dédéagatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 280.

Vice-Consul Willshire to Consul Blunt.

Dedeagatch, November 13, 1877.

Sir,

I AM happy to inform you that during the past month this town and its neighbourhood have enjoyed perfect tranquillity and security, and that, notwithstanding the critical circumstances in which the country finds itself, Dédéagatch may be considered lucky as being one of the exceptional places that up to this moment suffer the least from the effects of the war. However, it cannot be expected that this favourable state of things will be of long duration, for, as you are perfectly aware, the inhabitants of this place derive their whole support from the transit trade, which, when it fails, plunges them into want and misery.

The prohibition to export grain, which the Turkish Government has thought fit to decree, will be a hard blow to this population, especially to the working people, as it deprives them of the work it afforded them, and consequently of the means of earning their daily bread. I much fear the approaching winter will be one of great distress to many poor families.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. W. WILLSHIRE.

No. 281.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 1471.) *Constantinople, December 12, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sulina respecting the withdrawal of the Italian Vice-Consul from that port.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 281.

Vice-Consul Stokes to Mr. Layard.

Sulina, December 5, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Italian Vice-Consulate at this place has been withdrawn, in fact abolished, for the present. The Italian Vice-Consul left this for Constantinople last week, and to-day all the other employés leave for the same destination. Why the Vice-Consulate has been withdrawn I am at a loss to imagine.

I have, &c.

(Signed) OCTAVIUS STOKES.

No. 282.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 1472. Confidential.) *Constantinople, December 12, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE learnt from several quarters that the Grand Vizier has lately stated that he does not see why Turkey should make any difficulty in acceding to a demand from Russia, as one of the conditions of peace, for the free passage of the Straits for her fleets. His Highness is said to have observed that it was England that chiefly objected to the opening of the Dardanelles to Russia, and it was her interests that were chiefly concerned in the matter. As she had, however, done nothing for Turkey, Turkey was not called upon to make further sacrifices for her. His Highness held some such language a day or two ago to Mr. Jocelyn. Server Pasha, in speaking to me on subject at his reception on Monday last, dropped hints to me to the same effect. There is no doubt that the idea of coming to a separate and direct arrangement with Russia, without regard to the interests of England or any other Power, is gaining ground. The Turks are beginning to feel that it is useless for them to look for help in any direction, and that the best way to save themselves from complete destruction is to accept such conditions as Russia may be disposed to give them.

There is an impression amongst some influential Turks that Russia, on the other hand, might be inclined to make concessions to Turkey, to which they attach great importance, but which Russia may perhaps not only consider of little value, but may even be glad to give. One of these is the abolition of the Capitulations between the two countries. This measure would enable the Porte, it is argued, to put an end to all the Capitulations, on the ground that the Treaty of Paris, which was entered into for the protection of the Turkish Empire, had been torn up. It is believed that no Power would go to war to enforce them if Russia had abandoned them, and that Turkey would thus gain an independence and liberty of action which she has hitherto not enjoyed, in consequence of the right of interference in her internal affairs claimed by foreign Powers, mainly under the Capitulations. Russia would, it may be feared, be ready to make a concession to Turkey, which would inevitably lead her into future difficulties, bring about quarrels with other nations, create internal disorder, and soon give Russia occasion to enter upon a new war against her, which would end by the conquest and annexation of Turkey in Europe, and of the whole, or the greater part, of Asia Minor.

I give your Lordship these Turkish views for what they are worth. They may be principally interesting as an indication of the direction which public opinion, guided by men of influence, is taking in Turkey. I cannot at present say that there is a probability of any such proposal being made by Turkey, or accepted by Russia. There is no doubt, as I have frequently had occasion to mention to your Lordship, that the Porte would gladly avail itself of any opportunity that might offer to shake off the Capitulations, to which, not without some reason, it attributes the greater part of the misfortunes that have befallen the Turkish Empire.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 283.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 1473. Most Confidential.) *Constantinople, December 12, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE news of the capitulation of Plevna was received yesterday at the Porte. Your Lordship's telegram announcing the event enabled me to give the Grand Vizier the first authentic information of it. The Turkish public are not yet aware of this new disaster, and it is as yet too early to judge of the impression that it may make upon them.

Server Pasha sent in the afternoon to ask me to see him, and came to me late in the evening. He said that he had consulted with the Grand Vizier and one or two of his colleagues as to the course to be pursued under present circumstances, and had proposed to them that an appeal should be made, without loss of time, to the Powers that were parties to the Treaty of Paris for their intervention in favour of peace. His proposal, he said, had been agreed to, but it was at the same time decided that no step should be taken until Her Majesty's Government were consulted with respect to it.

His Excellency then showed me the draft which he had prepared, and asked my opinion of it.

It was moderately worded, and gave not an unfair sketch of the origin of the war. It declared the readiness of the Sultan to make all the reforms for the better government of his Christian subjects that were required of him, referring to the Constitution which His Majesty had pledged himself to carry out as a guarantee for them. It rendered justice to the valour displayed by the Russian armies, and the glory they had acquired on the field of battle. It ended by representing that both Russia and Turkey had now made sufficient sacrifices, and that the time was come when the Powers might intervene to put a stop to so much bloodshed and misery.

I told Server Pasha that, although personally I saw no objection to the appeal, I could not give an opinion on the subject without first communicating with your Lordship. He begged me to do so at once by the telegraph, as he was to see the Sultan on the following morning with the Grand Vizier, and if His Majesty approved of the appeal it would be sent off immediately to the Turkish Representatives abroad. He was very anxious, therefore, to know whether Her Majesty's Government objected to the step that he was about to take. The fall of Plevna furnished, he thought, a favourable opportunity for making a last effort for peace. The Emperor's honour and desire for military glory must now be satisfied, and if the Russian armies were to make an attempt to advance upon Adrianople, the difficulties of coming to a settlement, and the dangers to the peace of Europe, would be greatly increased. He had not consulted the Cabinet upon the appeal, because there was a party in it which was in favour of coming to a direct and separate understanding with Russia. He thought it, therefore, better to avoid a discussion on the subject, and only two or three of the Ministers had been made aware of what he intended to do.

Server Pasha hinted to me that if this appeal failed the Porte might be compelled to enter into direct negotiations with Russia, and that probably the first step in that direction would be to authorize Suleiman Pasha to treat with the Emperor for an armistice. But he begged me to consider what he had said on this subject as most secret, and not to make any official use of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 284.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 1477.) *Constantinople, December 13, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a private letter to me from Mr. Consul Reade, which contains the only news that I have received for sometime past from Rustchuk, and which may be interesting to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 284.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Rustchuk, December 7, 1877.

My dear Sir,

I AM not yet in a position to report to you officially, but I will avail myself of the departure of an Englishman to the railway to-morrow to give you privately some information from this.

The bombardment of Rustchuk from the other side the Danube continues almost daily, notwithstanding the foggy weather that prevails here at this moment. The houses close to the Consulate have been turned into hospitals, over which four Red Crescent flags are flying. Several shells have already fallen very near to them, and one fell two days ago in the pharmacy of these hospitals (one of the adjacent houses).

This morning several shells passed right over the Consulate and fell in the upper end of the town.

The number of batteries on the opposite side has increased very considerably within

the last ten days, and it is said that works are being constructed close to the island, opposite Rustchuk. If so, the fire that may soon be expected will be double what it has hitherto been on the hottest day.

The poor inhabitants of Rustchuk, and the sick and wounded soldiers in the hospitals, are thus kept in a constant state of consternation; notwithstanding the rain and wind, many women and children are constantly out in the streets, being afraid of remaining in their houses. I have been asked by many as to what can be the object of this firing, but of course I could not imagine any legitimate cause.

Since my last visit here there have been no Bashi-Bazouk or Circassian excesses to speak of.

A great many Bulgarian and other Christians who had left Rustchuk have returned, but I have not as yet heard of much suffering amongst them, except as regards fuel, about which I intend to speak to the Vali to-morrow.

The country all round has been reduced to a frightful condition. Hardly a tree is to be seen, only short thick stumps, which also are gradually disappearing. The very roots of almost all the vines have been torn up for fuel, thus the place must soon become a complete desert.

I have also been told that the doors, windows, and other wood-work of many of the houses that have been deserted are being torn out for fuel. I shall know more to-morrow on this subject, and, if true, shall draw the Vali's attention to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 285.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 1478.) *Constantinople, December 13, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Sultan opened the second Ottoman Parliament this morning. His Majesty performed this interesting and important ceremony in the magnificent hall of the Palace of Dolmabaghtchi. He was received by the Ministers, the Diplomatic Body, the Great Ulema, the principal functionaries of State, the heads of the various religious communities, the senators, the deputies, and other notables.

His Majesty stood by the side of a magnificent golden throne set with jewels, part of the ancient spoils of an Egyptian campaign. The Imperial speech was read by His Majesty's Secretary, Said Pasha. I have the honour to inclose a translation of it.

The scene was very imposing and impressive, and of more than ordinary interest, owing to the disastrous events of the last few days. His Majesty looked worn and depressed. He was very simply dressed, a military cloak covering his uniform. He saluted the Assembly on entering and leaving the hall, and sent the Grand Master of the Ceremonies to the Members of the Diplomatic Body to express his thanks to them for their attendance.

It was remarked that the heads of the non-Mussulman communities, the Greek and Armenian Patriarchs, the head of the Chaldean sect, the Chief Rabbi of the Jews, and others, were placed in a very prominent position immediately behind the Ministers of State, by whom they were warmly received on their entrance. I took occasion to speak to them after the ceremony, and they expressed their great satisfaction at the distinction which had been shown them.

Judging from the Consular reports that I have received, the selection of the Deputies for the new Chamber has been on the whole a good one. Many enlightened and respectable men appear to have been sent up from the provinces. I trust that this second Parliament may not be inferior to the first, and may render important services to the Empire. The President of the Lower House has not yet been elected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 285.

Speech of His Majesty the Sultan at the Opening of Parliament, December 13, 1877.

Sénateurs et Députés,

J'AI la satisfaction d'ouvrir le Congrès et de voir les Députés de la nation.

Ainsi qu'il est à votre connaissance, la déclaration de la guerre contre nos Etats qui eut lieu l'année dernière de la part de la Russie, nous a obligés de nous défendre et la guerre continue à l'heure qu'il est. Les troubles qui éclatèrent il y a deux ans et demi s'étendirent aussi à d'autres endroits, et une partie de nos sujets, qui indépendamment des droits d'égalité dont jouissent tous nos sujets avait eu l'avantage jusqu'ici de conserver intégralement leur nationalité et leur langue, et se sont malgré cela écartés de la voie droite et ont causé préjudice à eux-mêmes, à leur pays, et à leurs compatriotes. Quant aux habitants des Principautés de Moldo-Valachie qui étaient dans un état de prospérité sous une Administration indépendante, ils ont été amenés à déclarer leur hostilité à notre Gouvernement. Ces évènements, d'une gravité sans exemple, avaient augmenté les difficultés de la guerre; cependant le pays n'a pas manqué de faire tous ses efforts pour y faire face. Les marques de patriotisme offertes par tous les Osmanlis en général pendant cette guerre sont une preuve irrécusable qu'ils possèdent des sentiments patriotiques à un degré suprême. De même par leur persévérance et par leur valeur nos soldats ont été l'objet de l'admiration générale. Je fais appel pour la conservation de nos droits au concours patriotique de nos sujets.

Je considère comme d'heureux évènements pour nos Etats le fait de l'achèvement de l'organisation de l'armée territoriale et l'empressement sincère manifesté par nos sujets non-Musulmans pour y prendre une part effective et réelle. Les immunités dont jouissent mes sujets non-Musulmans ont été raffermies de toutes façons par la Constitution, et puisqu'ils sont égaux devant la loi et ont les mêmes droits et devoirs que les Musulmans, celui des devoirs qui contribue le plus à l'établissement du droit d'égalité étant naturellement la participation au service militaire, la reconnaissance de ces devoirs est digne d'être apprécié, et en conséquence il a été arrêté que mes sujets non-Musulmans seront admis aux autres services militaires. L'exécution pleine et entière de la Constitution étant la seule mère de salut de notre Empire, nous avons toujours désiré vivement que toutes les classes de nos sujets jouissent du bonheur d'une parfaite égalité et que notre pays participe aux progrès de la civilisation du siècle, que les finances soient réformées, et que surtout nous puissions remplir nos engagements, que la répartition et la perception des impôts soit faite d'après les règles de l'économie politique et de manière à garantir les habitants de tout préjudice, que dans le but qu'une parfaite justice soit observée dans les tribunaux certains principes fondamentaux de droit soient réformés selon les exigences de l'époque, que pour faciliter la possession des terres l'Administration des Vacoufs soit améliorée, que la formation et les attributions des Communes qui servent de base à l'Administration soient établies, et enfin que l'organisation de la police soit perfectionnée; mais par malheur la guerre a retardé l'accomplissement de mes intentions sincères. En outre les malheurs de la guerre ayant dépassé ses limites naturelles, une foule de mes sujets sans défense, des femmes et des enfants n'ayant aucune responsabilité d'après les lois de la guerre, ont subi des traitements cruels et sanguinaires dont la charité humaine répugnerait d'entendre le récit. J'espère que l'avenir n'empêchera pas la justice de se faire jour.

L'année dernière les rapports qui ont été référés à vos conseils concernant la formation et les attributions des cercles municipaux de Constantinople et des provinces ont été érigés en lois, et les règlements intérieurs du Sénat et de la Chambre des Représentants ayant été sanctionnés, ont été mis en vigueur. Cette année aussi parmi les projets de loi qui ont été préparés par le Conseil d'Etat et qui vous seront soumis, celui de la procédure civile, de l'élection générale, des devoirs des Ministres et du Conseil des Ministres, les règlements de la Haute Cour et de la Cour des Comptes étant les plus importants, je les recommande d'une façon spéciale à votre zèle, ainsi que la solution de plusieurs questions ayant trait aux règlements qui ont été discutés pendant votre précédente session relativement aux vilayets, à la presse, à l'impôt et à l'état de siége, et enfin la loi du budget de l'année prochaine. Le fait que notre Gouvernement n'a point oublié, même au milieu des préoccupations d'une grande guerre, les réformes intérieures est une preuve réelle de nos intentions progressives.

Députés,

Pour trouver la vérité dans les questions de lois et d'administration et pour garantir l'intérêt du pays, il est indispensable que les membres des deux Chambres réunies puissent échanger leurs idées avec parfaite liberté, et comme cela vous est ordonné par la Constitution elle-même je ne crois pas nécessaire de vous donner à ce sujet d'autres ordres et recommandations.

Nos relations avec les Puissances amies continuent à être bonnes. Que Dieu Tout-Puissant accorde succès à nos efforts!

No. 286.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1479. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 13, 1877.

WHEN I saw Server Pasha on Monday last, at his usual weekly reception of the Diplomatic Body, I informed his Excellency that, in pursuance of his request, your Lordship had instructed Her Majesty's Consul in Crete to advise the Christians of that island to send Commissioners or Delegates to Constantinople to discuss with the Porte the amendments they required in their Organic Law, but that Mr. Sandwith was of opinion that, for various reasons, they could not be persuaded to take this step.

I urged his Excellency not to allow any unnecessary difficulties to stand in the way of a settlement of the questions which had arisen between the Porte and the Christian Cretans, and I asked him whether he could not modify his resolution not to send Commissioners to the island to inquire into their grievances. His Excellency replied that whenever a measure of this kind had before been taken, it had led to agitation and additional mischief, but still he was disposed to do what he could to satisfy the Cretans, and he would think over the matter. His Excellency informed me to-day that the Porte had decided upon waving its objections, and that two Delegates would be sent at once to Crete, one of whom would be Adossides Pasha (Costaki Effendi), the Under-Secretary for the Interior, and a Christian, who is already favourably known in the island. I believe the appointment to be a very good one. The other Commissioner, Salim Effendi, is a Mahommedan, and was formerly Director-General of the Telegraphic Department, and has held other important public appointments.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 287.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 1480.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 14, 1877.

M. CHRISTICH called upon me early this morning to inform me that, in pursuance of instructions from his Government, he had just sent a note to the Porte declaring that Servia was in a state of war with Turkey. The grounds assigned for this step are that the Turkish Government has not fulfilled the engagement entered into by it at the conclusion of peace with the Principality last year to amnesty those of its subjects who had been compromised by taking part with Servia in hostilities against Turkey, but had, on the contrary, persecuted and maltreated them, and that the Porte had been connected with intrigues recently carried on against the Servian Government.

M. Christich leaves Constantinople this afternoon by the Trieste steamer. He appeared to think that he might be exposed to some personal offence on the part of the Turkish authorities and population, and begged me to allow him to have a cavass of the British Embassy to protect him in case of necessity. I cheerfully consented to his request. But I spoke on the subject a day or two ago to Server Pasha, when a declaration of war from Servia and the departure of the Servian Agent were anticipated, and his Excellency said that the Porte felt the highest esteem for M. Christich's personal character, and that he need be under no apprehension whatever of any unpleasant demonstration against him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 288.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 48. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, December 7, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to submit, herewith inclosed, for the information of your Lordship, a copy of a despatch, with a copy of its inclosure, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the conciliatory disposition evinced by some of the Ottoman provincial authorities towards the Bulgarian Christians in the Sandjaks of Adrianople and Philippopolis.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 288.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, December 7, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclosure herewith, for the information of your Excellency, the copy of an interesting despatch from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert of the 2nd instant, reporting the arrival of Ali Haïdar Pasha at Philippopolis as new military commander there, in the room of Ibrahim Pasha, and bearing testimony to the solicitude evinced by Rifaat Pasha, the second in command, for the protection and welfare of the Bulgarian Christians in that province.

Rifaat Pasha appears to have successfully carried out the instructions which Raouf Pasha, the late Commander-in-chief of the army of the Balkans, had issued, as reported by me in my despatch, Separate, of the 19th October last, relative to the recovery and protection of Bulgarian fugitives.

Mr. Calvert reports that "some 500 Bulgarian men, women, and children, emboldened by what they heard of his kindness (Rifaat Pasha's), were induced by a message from the Pasha to issue from their hiding places in the Balkans and return to Sopat and Carlowa, from whence they had fled three months before."

Your Excellency will also be glad to hear that, during my return journey from Kyzanlik to Adrianople, I found that the Sub-Governors of Eski-Zaghra and Yeni-Zaghra were taking measures to reclaim Bulgarian fugitives who were concealed in the Kutchuk Balkans; in the first district 120, and in the second 97, of these poor people, most of them women and children, have already been recovered. The Turkish peasants of Djonali, a Bulgaro-Turkish village about four hours from Yeni-Zaghra, have kindly taken charge of, and are supporting, twelve of these fugitives.

It is but fair to add that the present conciliatory attitude of the subordinate provincial authorities towards the Bulgarian Christians has been stimulated as much by Ahmet Vefik Pasha, the late Governor-General of Adrianople, as by Raouf Pasha. The liberal and humane disposition of these functionaries, and the vigour and personal energy they have both displayed under very difficult and trying circumstances, have largely promoted the present improved state of affairs in the Sandjaks of Adrianople and Philippopolis.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 288.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Philippopoli, December 2, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Ali Haïdar Pasha, General of Division, arrived here a few days ago to assume the duties of Military Commandant. I have had several opportunities of seeing and conversing with his Excellency, and am able to endorse, as far as my short acquaintance with him may allow, the reputation which he is said to enjoy for rectitude, moderation, and good sense.

Rifaat Pasha, who in the interval between Ibrahim Pasha's recall and the arrival of Ali Haïdar Pasha was left at the head of the military administration of the district, has acted in a manner deserving of great praise. He has liberated nearly 200 Bulgarians from prison, amongst others all, except two, of those who had been arrested in the town of Philippopolis. These last were set free the day before Ali Pasha's arrival.

Rifaat Pasha's opinion is that the punishment already dealt out to the insurgent and disaffected portion of the Bulgarian population is sufficient, and that the time has arrived for employing measures of conciliation.

During his recent stay at Carlowa he did a vast amount of good by severely repressing all tendencies to aggression on the remaining Bulgarian inhabitants, and by assuring the Mussulman population that it was the steadfast wish of the Sultan that they should forget their grievances against the Bulgarians. Better still, I am happy to be able to report that some 500 Bulgarian men, women, and children, emboldened by what they heard of his kindness, were induced by a message from the Pasha to issue from their hiding-places in the Balkans, and return to Sopat and Carlowa, whence they had fled three months before. Since his return here Rifaat Pasha's solicitude for the welfare of the Christians in those two places has not diminished. He keeps himself in constant communication with them lest they should suffer from the misconduct or neglect of the subordinate officials, whom at his departure he charged to exert the utmost vigilance in keeping order.

Rifaat Pasha assures me that the new Military Commandant is entirely of his own way of thinking as regards the treatment of the Bulgarians.

He himself appears anxious to wipe out the unfavourable impression which his extreme severity and general bearing during the period of Ibrahim Pasha's stay produced upon myself and upon all impartial observers. He states that while the latter functionary remained in power as his immediate superior, he could not, without compromising himself, act as he would have wished; that he was obliged to do the bidding of his chief, who took an early opportunity of reproving him for what he termed his intimacy with the English Vice-Consul.

Amongst other measures which Rifaat Pasha has taken, and Ali Pasha has approved, for the re-establishment of tranquillity in the district, I may mention that he has doubled all the patrols of mounted gendarmerie, by incorporating with them men of the militia reserve, or "Mustafiz." In each Bulgarian village, moreover, he has quartered a guard composed of men of the same force, with a view to protecting the Christians from such violence as the Redifs of the 2nd and 3rd ban (now being called out for the first time since the beginning of the war) might be disposed to commit.

For misconduct of various kinds, recruits, Circassians, Zeibeks, and other irregulars are almost daily flogged in the konak yard, Rifaat Pasha himself superintending the punishment, which varies between 12 and 120 stripes on the back.

The presence of irregulars, however, continues to occasion much disorder in the country, and, in spite of the severity with which offenders are treated, crimes are of continual occurrence. The Circassian refugees still plunder impartially both Mussulman and Christian peasants.

In the village of Stroyowo, the other night, a party of them wounded a number of women with their knives, to extort money. These ruffians have not been caught, and probably will not be.

At Tchashnegair Yeni-Mahallé, three hours from here, this week, three Turks of a neighbouring village committed a worse outrage: they murdered the Bulgarian tchorbadji, and wounded his wife and daughter, to make them give up their supposed hoard. In this instance, however, retribution has come sooner than the delinquents expected. On the complaint of these women, the murderers have been arrested.

Rifaat Pasha last night promised me, with a vehemence quite unusual in him, that, if found guilty, as, with the evidence of the two women and other witnesses of the crime, he believes they will be, the murderers shall all three be summarily executed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 289.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 49. Political.)

My Lord, *Adrianople, December 7, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, with a copy of Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert's despatch of the 2nd instant, relative to military preparations in my district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 289.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, December 7, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch of the 2nd instant from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, reporting the levy of the 2nd and 3rd bans of the Redifs of the Sandjak of Philippopolis.

I am told that most of these Redifs, as well as those who are being enrolled in the Sandjak of Adrianople, will join the army of reserve which is to be formed at this place, the command of which has been entrusted to Raouf Pasha, the late Commander-in-chief of the army of the Balkans.

His Excellency arrived here last week, and is now actively engaged in inspecting the batteries and entrenchments recently constructed round the town. He told me yesterday that ninety Krupp guns have been mounted in these batteries, and that he expects fifty more from Constantinople, with the necessary complement of gunners, for the complete armament of these works.

The several batteries are about to be telegraphically connected with each other, and with Raouf Pasha's head-quarters.

At present the garrison at Adrianople is composed of five battalions, chiefly Mustafiz; but Raouf Pasha tells me that it will be increased to fifty battalions.

The military authorities, I hear, contemplate collecting a force of 3,000 Circassian irregular cavalry, to be included in Raouf Pasha's command; and the civil authorities are storing in this and other towns of the district large quantities of barley, straw, and hay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 289.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopoli, December 2, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Redifs of the 2nd and third ban, now being called to arms in this military district, will probably amount to between 11,000 and 12,000 men.

The cazas of Tchirpan, Hasskeui, Zaghra, and Kyzanlik, which form part of military districts ("merkess") separate from that of Philippopolis (which includes the cazas of Tatar-Bazardjik, Akher Tchebbi, and Sultan Yeri), will probably furnish a contingent at least equal to the above. The whole sandjak of Philippopolis may, therefore, be expected to furnish between 22,000 and 24,000 fresh troops. This number is exclusive of the annual levy for military service, which has just taken place, and has furnished about 3,000 men.

A few hundreds of the newly-levied Redifs have already been sent into camp at Carlowa and Shipka. The remainder will, I understand, be as soon as possible sent to reinforce the army in the field north of the Balkans. But they are not yet supplied with arms or uniforms. With the latter items of outfit, however, it is likely they will have to dispense.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 290.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 77. Political.)

Canea, Crete, December 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Committee, which, as I stated in my despatch of the 3rd instant, was to have held a great meeting in a mountain fastness of Sphakia, has had the hardihood to assemble in a village called Arkúdena, near Episcopi, only three hours from Rethymo, and not far from the sea. M. Trifelli, the Consular Agent at Rethymo, telegraphs to me to-day that the Moslem families in the neighbourhood are already flying to that town, the garrison of which, only half a weak

battalion, is under orders for the seat of war in Europe. The gathering at Arkúdena is believed to number 500 armed men, which is probable, as they would not venture so far from their mountains unless in considerable force.

The object of the meeting is to consider what steps should be taken in the present crisis. The younger men are known to be chafing at the delay in starting a movement which all believe to be sooner or later inevitable. They see with their own eyes the weakness of a Government which is being brought daily more and more into contempt.

The subordinate Governors, aware of their precarious tenure of office at a time like the present, and, in some districts where the tithes are insignificant, left without salaries, are themselves discontented, and have to look for the execution of their orders to a police which has long ceased to expect even that pay which was their chief incentive to duty.

Some blockhouses evacuated by their garrisons have been demolished by the peasantry, and only two days ago a glaring act of audacity was committed by a native Christian who had undertaken to grind and convert into biscuit some wheat given him by the authorities for delivery to the force of zaptiehs in Apokorona. This man, and another Christian who had become his surety for the due performance of the contract, carried off the whole supply of biscuit to the mountains, and the Government is without the means of chastising the offenders. It is also confidently asserted that the head of the Sphakian police force, himself a local chief, was present with a number of his men at the meeting in Arkúdena.

With such facts before their eyes, it is not surprising that the thoughtless Cretans should become impatient of the considerations of prudence urged by their elders. Those considerations are backed by all the influence of the Greek Government, which, by its recognized agents in the island, is as earnest as ever it was in dissuading the people from engaging in an untimely struggle, and it is to be expected that the advice offered by Her Majesty's Government, that the people should give the Porte an opportunity of satisfying their demands by sending delegates to Constantinople, will not be without weight on the side of peace. Full publicity will be given at the meeting to that recommendation from the mouths of their most trusted chiefs, though I cannot be positive that it meets with their approval. In talking on this subject with some influential Christians, they seem persuaded that the Porte in suggesting this measure is only desirous of gaining time, and has no real desire of granting their demands. In spite, however, of the gravity of the situation, I incline to think that prudent counsels will prevail.

I have just received intelligence that the Chief Kokinaki, who, as reported in the above-mentioned despatch, landed a fortnight ago near Candia with a dozen followers, has been arrested with seven of his men. This could hardly have been effected without the connivance of a rival Chief, whom I stated to be opposed to his designs. This news is likely to have a quieting effect on the meeting at Arkúdena.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—I have taken the liberty of suggesting to his Excellency Mr. Layard the propriety of the presence of a British ship-of-war in Suda Bay during the present excited condition of the island.

T. B. S.

No. 291.

Consul Sir C. Scbright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 26. Political. Confidential.)

Corfu, December 17, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit copy of a despatch received from Santa Maura this morning conveying information respecting the military movements in that direction.

2. Mr. Onofrio further reports that in addition to Stuppa's band, referred to in my last week's despatch, another, to operate in Albania, is being formed on the Greek side, under the auspices of Colonel Grivas and the Russian Propaganda at Santa Maura, in which fifty Santa Mauriotes have so far been enlisted, and thirty Prevesans. The band will be augmented, no doubt, by a contingent of Acarnanians, who are all Grivas' devoted adherents.

This is the way insurrections are generally set on foot in Turkish territory. The Acarnanians are adepts in such exploits.

3. Mr. Henry Slade, a nephew of the late Admiral, and an agent of the Red Cross

Society, arrived two days ago from Scutari, which he left on the 8th instant. He gave me many interesting particulars respecting the struggle around Antivari between the Turks and Montenegrins, who, to all appearances, were in a bad way; but as he assured me that telegraphic communications had been re-established, Mr. Kirby Green will of course keep your Lordship fully advised of all that is passing, unless in a case of absolute necessity, it would not be right in me to "trespass on my neighbour's manor."

Mr. Slade touched at all the ports between the mouth of the Boyana and Corfu, and found all quiet.

4. As referred to in my telegram of the 15th instant, Her Majesty's ship "Coquette" will start to-morrow for Antivari.

My great difficulty with respect to Commander Festing's mission is to find a qualified and trustworthy interpreter to accompany the ship, as none of the officers understand any language but their own.

I may possibly succeed in finding a person adapted for the service, but Commander Festings tells me he has no authority to supply an extra hand of the kind with rations or to allow him pay. I venture to request your Lordship may be pleased to arrange this matter with the Admiralty, as we have not a single Consular Agent between Corfu and Antivari from whom to obtain information respecting the actual state of the country along the coast.

5. The "Coquette" cannot possibly make her way up the Boyana to Scutari, nor could Commander Festings venture to leave the vessel in such weather and on such a coast, in order to communicate with the Consul. I have, therefore, made up my mind to inform Mr. Green, by telegraph, of the probable date of the "Coquette's" arrival in his vicinity, so as to give him an opportunity of communicating personally, or otherwise, at either of the safe harbours of San Nicolo or San Giovanni di Medua, which are the nearest to Scutari.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure in No. 291.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Santa Maura, December 15, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that on Wednesday last, 13th instant, a telegram from the Minister of War was received by the Commandant of this garrison, ordering the troops assembled here to hold themselves in readiness to move on to the frontier, but the final marching order has not yet been sent, nor is the destination known.

The order given some days ago to the battery of artillery stationed at Missalonghi to leave for this place, where arrangements for quartering the men had been made by Major Tournaki, had been countermanded, and the battery is now to hold itself in readiness to leave for the frontier.

2. The above orders, given immediately after the fall of Plevna, have given rise to sundry speculations as to the attitude of the Hellenic Government, in consequence of the turn of events at the seat of war.

3. Private intelligence from the frontier bears that a body of about 1,500 Zeiboks is concentrated near Anino, and that another batch of Bashi-Bazouks arrived at Prevesa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANCIS ONOFRIO.

P.S.—*December* 16.—No fresh arrivals of troops to be reported.

F. O.

No. 292.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 12. Political.)

Varna, November 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith inclosed, copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte relative to a judgment of the Egyptian Military Tribunal here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure in No. 292.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Varna, November 30, 1877.

Sir,

I DEEPLY regret to have to report to your Excellency the occurrence here on Friday, the 22nd instant, by the Military Tribunal, of a most cruel act of injustice, involving no less than the hanging of a respectable Bulgarian trader of Shumla on no adequate grounds whatever.

I must first state what took place at Shumla some four months ago, and which, in fact, led to the hanging of this unfortunate Bulgarian.

It appears that towards the latter end of July last, Kadri Effendi, the Tahvirat Kiatch (despatch writer) of the Government, having heard that the Bulgarian in question, Dragoilo Nidelcho Radush, had a very fine milch buffalo, determined on obtaining possession of it. Dragoilo was accordingly sent for, and told that he must give it up, as it belonged to Kadri Effendi.

Dragoilo replied that all the quarter in which he lived knew that he had purchased the animal some time ago in the open market. The Turk answered that it did not matter, the buffalo must be given up to him. To which the owner replied that if the claim was brought before the Mijlis and he was condemned to give it up, he would of course do so, but if not, he did not see why he should be dispossessed of his property. He then went to the Chief Mufti of the vilayet and obtained a tetva (equivalent to counsel's opinion in England) in his favour.

Seeing this Kadri Effendi set an Armenian friend of his, another Government employé, the Sunduk Emir, or Government Cashier, Adem Effendi, to frighten the Bulgarian into giving up the buffalo, but he failed to do so, and thus the matter rested for the moment.

About a month afterwards (27th August), Dragoilo, the Bulgarian, came to Varna as usual on business. The train was late, and when he reached the inn it was quite dark. He asked for a room, and one was shown to him. He then asked for a light, and waited for it at the door. An adjacent room was occupied by a Pomak from the neighbourhood of Rustchuk, who was intoxicated, and kept asking for one thing after another. Seeing that the servant boy of the inn, a young Bulgarian, of about 15 years of age, kept answering the Pomak without taking any further notice of him, Dragoilo simply said, "Why don't you bring me a light, am I not as good as the other passengers, who have lights, and can wait for coffee and the other things they are asking for, whilst I am kept in the dark?"

The Pomak heard this, and asked if it was meant for him. Dragoilo replied that it was meant for all those who were served with what they could not wait for, whilst he was not.

The Pomak said, "You shall pay for this," and left the inn, but soon returned with some police, to whom he said, "I deliver to you this Comitadji (Revolutionist) who has been swearing at the Padishah and the Ottoman religion," upon which he was seized and thrown into prison.

Next morning he was brought before the Governor, who, on hearing the case, at first dismissed it, but afterwards sent it to the Military Tribunal, who, on the testimony of two watchmen, who were not present, sentenced Dragoilo to three months' imprisonment.

Just as this term was expiring, Kadri Effendi, the Shumla employé, who had failed in getting possession of the buffalo, happened to be passing through Varna on his way to Constantinople, and hearing that Dragoilo was about to get his liberty, went to the members of the Military Tribunal, and spoke of the man in such a way as actually to induce them to sentence him to be hanged, and which was carried out on the morning of Friday, the 22nd instant.

Such is the frightful story I have heard from most well-informed and reliable persons, and who are not Bulgarians.

The unfortunate man had a wife of a very respectable family and four little children, who were taken to Shumla three days ago in a condition that may readily be imagined.

I did not hear of the case until after the execution, of which very few were aware till all was over.

I spoke to the Governor myself privately on the subject the same day, but, as usual, being afraid of coming into collision with the military authorities, he simply denied the truth of what was known to the whole place, and declined entering into any details.

This Military Tribunal, I hear, is composed solely of Egyptian officers, and very few of whom speak Turkish, consequently all the proceedings, being in Turkish, have to pass through an interpreter. What mistakes may therefore occur in so important a Tribunal,

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 293.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 802.) *Vienna, December 14, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. St. John's telegram, repeated to me to-day by your Lordship, reporting that an Austrian ironclad had passed Ragusa on her way to the Albanian coast, I have the honour to inform you, that on my inquiring two days ago at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with what object the vessel in question had sailed from Pola, I was told that her voyage was undertaken for the protection of Austrian subjects during the present military operations on the Turkish coast of the Adriatic.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 294.

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 21.)

(No. 122.) *Buda-Pesth, December 17, 1877.*

Sir,

YOUR Excellency will have read in the public prints the reports of Slav demonstrations at Agram and in some other towns of Croatia and Slavonia on the occasion of the fall of Plevna. As far as I can learn, they were of a comparatively unimportant character, and were got up as a species of mild retaliation for the former pro-Turkish rejoicings at Buda-Pesth.

Sensible people throughout Hungary, whichever way their sympathies may incline, unite in deprecating these manifestations as not only useless, but as positively injurious to the cause which they are intended to serve.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 295.

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 21.)

(No. 125.) *Buda-Pesth, December 17, 1877.*

Sir,

SINCE I sent my telegram of this morning, the text of which is recorded in my immediately preceding despatch No. 124 of this date, I have had an opportunity of conversing with an eye-witness of the whole of yesterday's proceedings.

His account of what happened at Buda differs considerably from that given in the newspapers, and describes the riot in front of the Minister President's official residence as having been somewhat serious.

The meeting was held in the Riding School at Pesth at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. It was not attended by any personage of political importance except the Deputy Helfy. Some 5,000 or 6,000 persons were present, and adopted by acclamation a resolution to the effect that the extension of Russian power, the creation of new Slav States on the Lower Danube, and the impairment of the independence and integrity of Turkey, constitute a danger for Hungary and Austria; that the Hungarian Government is bound to intervene, by force if necessary, in favour of freedom and popular rights; and that the meeting will hail such a policy with joy. A deputation of twenty-five persons was appointed to communicate the resolutions to the Minister President, M. Tisza; but the cry being raised, "We will go with you," the whole crowd march in procession through Pesth and across the suspension bridge to Buda. As I myself saw this part of the affair, I can state that so far there was no disturbance; but it appears that when the deputation and its followers arrived before the Minister President's house, it was informed that M. Tisza declined to receive it on the ground of the concourse of people by which it was accompanied. This intimation provoked an outburst of denunciation of M. Tisza's want of patriotism. Some students attempted to force the entrance of the official residence; the police resisted by force, and, I am assured, used great brutality to one of the students. Knives were forthwith drawn; a shower of large stones, hurled from slings, broke more than twenty of

M. Tisza's windows; an order was given for the employment of the military, and thereupon the mob retired, breaking, on their return to Pesth, some of the windows of the Liberal Club, and then quietly dispersing.

During this time a crowd had collected before the Turkish Consulate-General, crying "Eljen for Turkey!" "Down with Russia!" &c.; but my Turkish colleague was wise enough not to show himself.

There seems to be a general feeling that the promoters of yesterday's demonstration have committed a tactical mistake; but my own impression is that they had originally no intention of acting in a disorderly or illegal manner, nor any idea that M. Tisza would object to receive the deputation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 296.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

My Lord, *Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 20 Décembre, 1877.*

D'ORDRE de mon Gouvernement, j'ai l'honneur de communiquer à votre Excellence la copie ci-jointe d'une dépêche télégraphique, en date d'hier, que de viens de recevoir de son Excellence Server Pacha, et par laquelle le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, en me faisant part des observations du Gouvernement Impérial sur la nouvelle déclaration de guerre, notifiée à la Sublime Porte par l'Agent Servien à Constantinople, m'annonce que, par cet acte de rébellion, le Prince Milan Obrénovitch s'est mis lui-même, pour la seconde fois, en état de déchéance de la haute dignité qu'il tenait de la bienveillance Impériale.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) MUSURUS.

Inclosure in No. 296.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 19 Décembre, 1877.*

TOUTES les informations reçues par le Gouvernement Impérial s'accordaient à représenter le peuple Servien comme travaillé par son propre Gouvernement dans un sens hostile à la Sublime Porte, et ces agissements, dont l'origine remonte, peut-être, au lendemain du jour où la Sublime Porte consentait généreusement à rétablir ses relations avec la Principauté sur l'ancien pied, avaient pris depuis deux mois un caractère tellement alarmant que la Sublime Porte avait dû en signaler le danger aux Puissances unies, et consacrer tous ses efforts à prévenir tout ce qui pouvait contribuer à fournir, ne fût-ce qu'un prétexte à des projets criminels et à des excitations intéressées. La Sublime Porte se croyait autorisée à compter sur les sentiments du peuple Servien, sur les déclarations de fidélité du Prince Milan, ainsi que sur l'influence légitime des conseils des Puissances qui avaient le plus contribué au rétablissement des anciennes relations entre la Cour Suzeraine et la Principauté. Malheureusement cet espoir a été déçu.

Au mépris des conseils que les Grandes Puissances n'ont cessé, sur notre demande, d'adresser au Gouvernement de Belgrade, et contrairement aux déclarations formelles de fidélité et de dévouement du Prince Milan, ainsi qu'aux assurances qui nous étaient prodiguées jusqu'à ces derniers jours par son Agent à Constantinople, ce dernier vient de me remettre une note, en date du 7 Décembre, par laquelle il notifie, au nom de son Gouvernement, que la Serbie se considère de nouveau en état de guerre avec la Sublime Porte.

Comme motif de cette déclaration de guerre, le Gouvernement de Belgrade allègue que, contrairement à l'armistice accordé par la Sublime Porte, des réfugiés auraient été molestés à leur retour dans leurs foyers, et que la Sublime Porte aurait essayé de troubler l'ordre intérieur de la Principauté en prêtant un appui ouvert à des conspirateurs du dehors.

La Sublime Porte repousse avec indignation des assertions d'une fausseté évidente, inventées uniquement dans le but de donner un semblant de justification à un acte de rébellion injustifiable. Le véritable motif de cette nouvelle agression, tout le monde comprend, n'est autre que la chute de Plevna.

Obligée de nouveau à prendre les armes pour la défense de ses droits, la Sublime Porte, cependant, croit de son devoir d'établir dès aujourd'hui à qui doit incomber la responsabilité de cette agression, et quelles doivent en être les conséquences légales.

C'est en effet pour la seconde fois que le Prince Milan Obrénovitch s'est lui-même mis en état de déchéance de la haute dignité qu'il tenait de la haute bienveillance Impériale —déchéance qui doit être la conséquence légale de l'acte de rébellion qui vient d'être notifié officiellement à la Sublime Porte.

Cette déclaration est portée à la connaissance du peuple Servien, et, de votre côté, vous voudrez bien en faire l'objet d'une communication officielle au Gouvernement auprès duquel vous êtes accrédité.

No. 297.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, December 20, 1877, midnight.*

I LEARN from a reliable source that the Emperor will leave this on the 18th, if not an earlier date, for army of Caucasus. His Imperial Majesty will subsequently return to army of Danube.

No. 298.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21, 1 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, December 21, 1877, 9:45 A.M.*

FRENCH Minister for Foreign Affairs regards the refusal of the German Emperor as fatal to the Turkish request for the mediation of the Powers.

No. 299.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 21, 1877, 5 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Government are advised that the seizure of the Greek vessels in the Bosphorus cannot be disputed on any of the grounds stated in the Memorandum you inclosed. They cannot concur in the proposal therein contained to release vessels and issue fresh notification of blockade. This would vitiate past proceedings. Impress on Porte necessity of enforcing strict blockade, of granting no licences, and of clear, sound, and consistent decisions in Prize Court.

No. 300.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 884.) *Foreign Office, December 21, 1877.*

Sir,

I REFERRED to the Law Officers of the Crown your Excellency's despatches No. 1389 of the 25th ultimo and Nos. 1415 and 1416 of the 28th ultimo, relative to the seizure in the Bosphorus of certain vessels for breaking the blockade in the Black Sea; and I have now to inform you that Her Majesty's Government are advised that these seizures cannot be disputed on any of the grounds set forth in the Memorandum which was transmitted by your Excellency.

I have to add that Her Majesty's Government cannot concur in the proposal contained in this Memorandum, to the effect that these vessels should be released, and that a fresh notification of blockade should be issued. Such a course would, in their opinion, vitiate the past proceedings.

You will, however, impress upon the Porte the necessity of keeping up a really efficient blockade, and of granting no further licenses, and the urgency of clear, sound, and consistent decisions being given in the Prize Courts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 301.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 891. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, December 21, 1877.*

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and entered into general conversation upon the subject of the war, in which he dwelt upon the still unexhausted resources of Turkey, saying that the Porte was in a position to put 500,000 men into the field.

As his Excellency referred more than once to the possibility of English intervention, I thought it right to repeat the warning which I had frequently before given, namely, that no such intervention was to be expected, but that Her Majesty's Government would adhere to the conditions of neutrality which they had laid down.

I took the opportunity of expressing to Musurus Pasha, but in an unofficial manner, the wish that it were possible to form some clear idea of the general conditions of peace which the Porte would be prepared to accept.

In answer, his Excellency dwelt strongly on the impossibility of the Porte conceding exceptional privileges to any of the provinces of the Empire, or allowing the interference of the Powers in its independent administration.

I asked whether, in so speaking, his Excellency was expressing the views of the Turkish Government.

Musurus Pasha replied that he believed himself to be authorized to say so, and he proceeded to enlarge upon the merits of the new Turkish Constitution as affording sufficient security against the oppression of the non-Muhammedan races.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 302.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 134. Political.) *Scutari, December 6, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that, owing to the unusually severe weather, all active military operations on both the Montenegrin and Turkish sides have been greatly impeded since the 28th ultimo.

On the 30th Ali Saib Pasha having embarked on board the iron-clad "Orchanie," bearing the flag of Hussein Pasha, proceeded to the roadstead of Antivari, and opened fire on the Lighthouse fort on Punta Volovica, whence the Montenegrins replied with the guns they had found in the work. Two of the enemy's shots struck the "Orchanie," but did not pierce its armour, and, after fifty rounds had been fired by the iron-clad at a range of 1,400 yards, it was obliged, by the increasing storm, to put to sea, and twenty-six hours later gained with difficulty shelter in the Bay of Avlona, whence the Mushir Ali Saib Pasha returned yesterday to Scutari.

The "Orchanie" is still at Avlona refitting.

The bombardments of Podgoritza and Spuz have been suspended since the commencement of the operations in the district of Antivari, but within the last four days a force of about 8,000 Montenegrins has appeared in the vicinity of Podgoritza, and a portion of it is attempting an advance into the Clementi and Hotti Mountains.

The Turkish authorities in Spuz and Podgoritza have reduced the rations served out to the troops, and great economy is being observed in the expenditure of all ammunition and provisions, lest the Montenegrin advance above mentioned should prove successful, when the investment of the two places would become possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 303.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 335. Political.) *Cairo, December 14, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 159, Political, of the 7th instant, respecting the alleged passage of troops from India through Egypt under the guise of being a part of the Egyptian contingent, I have the honour to report that this absurd rumour has reached Egypt through the columns of the "Univers" newspaper, of which I inclose an extract.

The report is considered here as so palpably false as to be unworthy of notice. The whole Egyptian contingent in Turkey amounts to about 20,000 men, and my reports to your Lordship will have accounted for the whole number.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 303.

Extract from the "Univers."

AUTRE nouvelle.

Une question vient inopinément de surgir. Elle n'est encore qu'à l'état embryonnaire, mais, croyez-moi, sous peu elle fera du bruit, car la diplomatie Russe y voit une arme nouvelle contre l'Angleterre.

Après la prise de Gorny-Doubnink, on procéda à l'interrogatoire de Havzi Pacha, qui était le Commandant de cette position. Ce fut M. Mokeïeff, Orientaliste attaché à l'Etat-Major Russe, qu'on chargea de "faire causer" le Pacha. Au cours de la conversation, une déclaration du Général Turc produisit une impression profonde sur les assistants. On voulut tirer de Havzi des renseignements plus précis, mais le Pacha prisonnier ne put ou ne voulut en dire plus.

Voici de quoi il s'agit :—

M. Mokeïeff causait avec Havzi Pacha sur le contingent Egyptien.

"Combien de troupes Egyptiennes aviez-vous dans la guerre de Serbie?"—"Dix mille," répondit Havzi.

"Et en ce moment, combien le Prince Hassan, dans la Dobroudja, en possède-t-il?"—"De vingt à vingt-deux mille."

"Mais vous en avez encore à Choumla, Sophia, à Schipka, à Philippopolis, et à Widdin?"—"Oui."

"Comment se fait-il donc que l'Egypte, qui est en guerre avec l'Abyssinie, qui a ses frontières à garder et ses villes à occuper par des garnisons considérables, puisse vous envoyer tant de soldats?"—"Je ne sais," répondit le Pacha, "d'autant plus que nous ne comprenons pas leur langage. Je sais seulement que ces hommes arrivent sur des bateaux à vapeur à Port-Saïd, que là on les équipe, on les habille et on les arme, après quoi ils sont envoyés à Constantinople."

A ces mots, l'idée vint immédiatement aux assistants, que ce contingent présumé Egyptien n'était rien d'autre que des renforts envoyés *in petto* par la "perfide Albion" de l'Inde.

Voilà tout ce qu'a dit le Pacha Turc.

Comme je le note plus haut, il ne voulut ou ne put dire rien de plus, mais c'était assez pour forger contre l'Angleterre une accusation du crime de lèse-neutralité. Le Prince Gortschakoff est saisi en ce moment de cette affaire et prépare une note avec demande d'enquête.

Voilà la vérité vraie là-dessus ; il n'est pas inutile qu'elle soit connue à temps.

No. 304.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 1479. Confidential.) *Constantinople, December 13, 1877.*

My Lord,

WHEN I saw Server Pasha on Monday last, at his usual weekly reception of the Diplomatic Body, I informed his Excellency that, in pursuance of his request, your

Lordship had instructed Her Majesty's Consul in Crete to advise the Christians of that island to send Commissioners or Delegates to Constantinople to discuss with the Porte the amendments they required in their Organic Law, but that Mr. Sandwith was of opinion that, for various reasons, they could not be persuaded to take this step.

I urged his Excellency not to allow any unnecessary difficulties to stand in the way of a settlement of the questions which had arisen between the Porte and the Christian Cretans, and I asked him whether he could not modify his resolution not to send Commissioners to the island to inquire into their grievances. His Excellency replied that whenever a measure of this kind had before been taken it had led to agitation and additional mischief, but still he was disposed to do what he could to satisfy the Cretans, and he would think over the matter. His Excellency informed me to-day that the Porte had decided upon waiving its objections, and that two Delegates would be sent at once to Crete, one of whom would be Adossides Pasha (Costaki Effendi), the Under-Secretary for the Interior, and a Christian, who is already favourably known in the island. I believe the appointment to be a very good one. The other Commissioner, Salim Effendi, is a Mahommedan, and was formerly Director-General of the Telegraphic Department, and has held other important public appointments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 305.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 340.) *Athens, December 13, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I have been informed to-day that if an insurrection takes place in Crete, of which there appears to be every probability, it will commence in the western part of the island.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 306.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 354.) *Athens, December 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I have this day learned upon good authority that Hadji Michalis left the Piræus the day before yesterday in a sailing ship for Crete, having with him 30 men, 400 [rifles], and several cases of ammunition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 307.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 355. Confidential.) *Athens, December 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 354 of to day's date I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Photiades Bey called upon me this afternoon and informed me that he had told M. Tricoupi some days ago that Hadji Michalis, with a band of Cretan refugees, was about to leave Athens; that he gave him the name of the vessel in which he intended to sail, the name of the captain, the number of rifles, and the number of cases (eighty) of ammunition he intended taking with him; and that when he went to inform M. Tricoupi of his departure, M. Tricoupi said that he did not know it, but that this now explained to him what a Cretan had said to him, "that he had called upon Hadji Michalis, and that he had not found him at home."

It seems incredible that a band of thirty-one men, with stores of rifles and ammuni-

tion, could have left the Piræus harbour or Phalerum Bay entirely without the cognizance of the authorities, especially as they had been warned of the intentions of this band.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 308.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 356.) *Athens, December* 15, 1877.
My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 345 of the 13th instant, in which I expressed to your Lordship the opinion that the Greek Government might be forced to adopt an adventurous policy, I have the honour to report that I saw the French Minister this morning, and that he told me that he felt convinced the Greek Government would, sooner or later, engage in hostilities with Turkey, in which case the Porte would probably send a fleet to Greek waters and disembark irregular troops to occupy Athens, and that in that case he thought it highly desirable that some foreign man-of-war should be at hand to see that the town was not bombarded or pillaged, and that if an occupation took place that it should be effected in accordance with the rules of war among civilized nations.

I told the French Minister that I would write to your Lordship and ask Her Majesty's Government for authority to apply to Admiral Hornby in the event of the contingency he mentioned appearing probable; but I said I was very anxious that it should not be known I was taking this step, as I was afraid if the Greeks heard that there was a likelihood of a British force coming to Greek waters they might think it was coming to protect them against the Turks, and might consequently be encouraged to engage in the hostilities they appeared to be meditating.

I may mention that the Turkish Minister told me, a short time ago, that if hostilities broke out between Greece and Turkey the Porte would probably send a force of Albanian troops to occupy Athens; and I venture to suggest that, if war does unfortunately break out between the two States, the Porte should be urged to wage it, if possible, with regular, and not with irregular, troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 309.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 425. Very Confidential.) *Rome, December* 17, 1877.
My Lord,

ABOUT ten days ago Count Tornielli, in speaking confidentially on the subject of Austrian policy in the East, of which he does not entertain a very exalted opinion, told me that he expected shortly to receive from Vienna some authentic information which he believed would throw a good deal of light upon this somewhat mysterious subject. He was anxious, he said, that this information should be placed before Her Majesty's Government; and he had, therefore, directed M. de Martino, who was about starting on his return to London, to delay his departure, in order that he might take the document to General Menabrea for communication to your Lordship, and he added that he would also show it to me.

I accordingly called upon Count Tornielli again towards the end of last week, and asked him if the information to which he had before referred had reached him. He replied that it had, but that it did not appear to him to be so reliable as he had anticipated, and he had, therefore, authorized M. de Martino's returning to his post without it. It pretended to give a great many details as to the understanding with Russia and Germany in regard to future arrangements, but he could not say he was quite satisfied as to the source from which the information had been derived.

Count Tornielli said, however, that it must be quite clear to every one that Austria had been set at rest as regards her own particular interests. It all depended, however, in what those interests were supposed to consist. On this subject he believed there had been the most complete understanding established in the interview between Prince Bismarck and Count Andrassy. Something positive and substantial there must be in view, he said, or the Committee of the Delegations would not have been so fully satisfied as they had been with Count Andrassy's recent communications. For his own part, he could not help having a very strong conviction that Austria was to receive a very large share out of the Turkish Empire, not Bosnia and Herzegovina only, but probably a large portion, if not the whole, of Albania. If Austria had not been made safe ("si l'on ne s'était pas assuré de l'Autriche") then everything one saw in connection with her policy was inexplicable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 310.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 426.) *Rome, December* 17, 1877.
My Lord,

IN the course of a recent conversation with Count Tornielli I drew his attention to the reports in the papers of Italian ships being on the coast of Albania. He replied that the reports were incorrect, the Italian fleet was at Brindisi. There was, however, an Italian aviso cruising off the coast of Albania, and the object principally was to warn Italian fishermen to avoid fishing within the blockaded district, and in general to look after the interests of Italian subjects, of which there were many settled on the coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 311.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 428. Confidential.) *Rome, December* 17, 1877.
My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Count Tornielli, in connection with the affairs of Tunis, on which I had a conversation with him a few days ago, told me that he had received the day before a telegram from M. Pinna, stating that he had heard from a confidential, but sure source, that the French Consul-General had received orders from his Government, on the appearance of a Russian squadron off Tunis, to hoist his flag on St. Louis, and to leave the Regency with the *personnel* of his Consulate. Count Tornielli explained that St. Louis was, he believed, a piece of consecrated ground belonging to France outside the town.

As there are no Russian ships (at least as far as is known here) at present in the Mediterranean, I asked Count Tornielli if he had received any news of any having left the Baltic for a southern destination. He replied that he had no information whatever on the subject, and he seemed to think it very unlikely that Russia would be inclined, in the present state of affairs in Europe, to risk any of her ships in waters from whence, if hostilities were to break out between her and another Power, they would never return into a Russian port; but he had no doubt that Russia would be glad enough to secure a port in the Mediterranean if she had the chance of doing so, and he also mentioned that a report had reached him that on this subject there was an understanding between Germany and Russia by which Germany was also to secure a naval station in the Mediterranean; but it did not come, he said, from a source on which implicit reliance could be placed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 312.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 1029. Secret.) *Paris, December* 21, 1877.
My Lord,

WITH reference to my immediately preceding despatch No. 1028 of to-day, I may observe that no doubt M. Guglianni and others of the same stamp have conveyed to some people in France the idea that England has selfish objects in not lending herself unreservedly to the violent measures to which many of the French creditors of Egypt

would fain have recourse, in order to hold the Khedive to the letter of his bond. It is, in fact, plain enough that these creditors are in a state of great irritation, that they are extremely angry with the Khedive, and far from satisfied with England or with the English Agents in Egypt.

I do not, however, conceive that any very material change has taken place in the general feelings of the French respecting Egypt since I had the honour to address to your Lordship my Secret despatch No. 980 of the 7th of this month.

It is true that since that time a Ministry possessing the confidence of the majority of the Chamber of Deputies, and having consequently some prospect of remaining in office, has been appointed. It is true also that the Liberal Party, to which that Ministry belongs, is disposed to take a high estimate of what may be due to France with regard to Egypt; and it may also be remembered that M. Waddington, who has just been appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs, took opportunities, when he visited England some months ago, of deprecating the establishment of any English predominance in Egypt, on the ground that it would wound the feelings of the French and affect the cordiality of the relations between the two countries.

Still, I conceive that the belief of the majority of Frenchmen is that the course of events is tending fatally towards putting Egypt into the hands of England. The great increase in the value of Egyptian securities, which would be the consequence, might go far to reconcile some of the French holders of securities to the change; but the establishment of English rule in that country would undoubtedly inflict a wound on the national pride of the French in general. They feel, however, that neither their situation with regard to Germany, nor indeed the internal state of France, would allow them, in ordinary prudence, to involve themselves in a serious struggle beyond the frontier, or to send any considerable force to a distance from home. If, therefore, as much consideration as possible for their feelings in the mode of action were shown by England, the French would probably rather resign themselves to anything she might do in Egypt than engage with her in a hostile contest in which her whole strength might be exerted against them.

It might be otherwise if England had her hands full elsewhere. In such a case France would in all probability not only resist to the utmost the progress of English influence in Egypt, but make a strong effort to re-establish on a strong basis her own predominance in that country, and she might go very far in the hope of guarding against any risk of seeing England again in the ascendant there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 313.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 565.) *Pera, December 21, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

ROLLOWING received this day from Captain Fife from Sophia, dated yesterday, 5·25 P.M.:—

"Turkish detachment entrenched in Bestofticha Pass. Town said to be occupied by Russians. Servians commenced operations by small skirmishes. Two feet of snow in the plains, with appearance of continuing perhaps for two months, when traffic on roads difficult. Country of the (*sic*) roads impassable for all arms. Russians said to have only (?) transport.

No. 314.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 22.)

St. Petersburgh, December 22, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

EMPEROR returned here this morning, and was received with enthusiasm.

No. 315.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23.)

(No. . Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, December 22, 1877*

I AM informed secretly by Server Pasha that the Khedive has recommended the Sultan in the strongest terms to be entirely guided by the policy and views of (England?).

[A repetition of the above has been asked for.]

No. 316.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 569.)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, December 22, 1877.*

PORTE proposes an arrangement with reference to the two Italian ships with English cargoes seized for violation of blockade in Black Sea, on condition that the cargoes should remain at Constantinople and the ships be released. This solution has been accepted by the proprietor of the cargo, but seems to be objected to by the Italian Government. It would be desirable, if possible, to induce the Italian Government to accept it to avoid complications.

(Confidential.)

The Italian Minister suggests to me that this arrangement should be made, but please do not mention this at Rome.

No. 317.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23.)

(No. .)
(Telegraphic.) *Pera, December 22, 1877.*

LIEUTENANT CHERMSIDE telegraphs that heavy fall of snow has interrupted communication on Rustchuk-Varna railway.

No. 318.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23, 6·15 P.M.)

(No. 571.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 23, 1877, 12·15 P.M.*

PORTE will inform Austrian Ambassador, probably to-day, that after a delay of five days the navigation of the Danube to the mouth of the Pinok will be forbidden in consequence of war with Servia, and in pursuance of reservation made by the Turkish Government when it acceded to the request of Austria to permit it.

No. 319.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Adrianople, December 21, 1877.*

SNOWING heavily Adrianople since 24; Filibe and Sofia forty-eight hours.

No. 320.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December 23, 1877.*

I PROPOSE to start for London on Thursday next. Messenger leaves on Sunday. Railway communication stopped by snow since Emperor's departure.

No. 321.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 687.) *St. Petersburgh, December 13, 1877.*

My Lord,

I AM informed that the Emperor of Russia is expected to return here on the 22nd instant. His Majesty will return, viâ Warsaw, and not viâ Moscow.

Prince Gortchacow will join the Imperial train at Bucharest, and will accompany His Majesty to St. Petersburgh.

From private information I have received, it has been decided, after the fall of Plevna, to continue the military operations with increased vigour, unless the Sultan should appeal directly to the Emperor for peace. In that event it is thought probable that an armistice would be agreed to.

On the other hand, I very much doubt whether any offer of foreign mediation would be accepted by the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 322.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 693.) *St. Petersburgh, December 17, 1877.*

My Lord,

ON the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 430 of the 12th instant, I addressed to the Imperial Ministry for Foreign Affairs the note of which a copy is inclosed, together with a copy of the telegram communicated to your Lordship by Mussurus Pasha, respecting the casualties in the hospital at Rustchuk, in consequence of the fire of the Russian batteries directed at that building.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 322.

Lord A. Loftus to M. de Giers.

St. Petersburgh, December 17, 1877.

M. le Conseiller Privé,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Excellency, in accordance with the instructions of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the copy of a telegram from the Porte communicated to Her Majesty's Government by the Ottoman Ambassador in London.

In this telegram the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs states that the Governor of Rustchuk reports that the Russian batteries still continue to fire on the hospital, notwithstanding the Red Crescent flag surmounting it, and that several casualties from the effects of the Russian shells have occurred amongst the Turkish sick and wounded.

May I request your Excellency to communicate this representation to the proper authorities with the least possible delay, being fully convinced that in the interests of humanity, as well as with a desire to conform to the engagement of the Geneva Convention, immediate instructions will be issued to prevent, as far as may be possible, the recurrence of such casualties amongst the sick and wounded.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 323.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 694.) *St. Petersburgh, December 17, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copy of a note which I have addressed to M. de Giers, in accordance with the instructions conveyed in your

Lordship's despatch No. 431 of the 12th instant, bringing before the Imperial Government the request of the Grand Vizier for the repatriation of certain families which have been removed from Turkish territory in Armenia to that of Russia, and his Highness' observations on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 323.

Lord A. Loftus to M. de Giers.

M. le Conseiller Privé, *St. Petersburgh, December 17, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, in accordance with instructions which I have received from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that the Grand Vizier has, through Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, requested the intercession of Her Majesty's Government with the Government of the Emperor with a view to obtain permission for certain families which have been removed from Turkish territory in Armenia to return to their villages.

In forwarding this request of the Ottoman Government to your Excellency, I may mention that the Grand Vizier observed that, partly owing to the representations of Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, some Abkasian families, who complained that they had been brought away from their country against their will, have been sent back to it by the Ottoman Government. In a spirit of justice, therefore, it is hoped that similar measures may be taken by the Imperial Government with regard to those of the large number of Armenian families lately removed to Russian territory who may wish to return to their homes in Turkey.

I avail, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 324.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 701.) *St. Petersburgh, December 19, 1877*

My Lord,

IN reply to my inquiry to-day from M. de Giers as to the reported rupture of relations with the Bey of Tunis, his Excellency said that on the Imperial Government being informed of the intention of the Bey to send an auxiliary corps of 6,000 men to the aid of Turkey, the Russian Consul had been instructed to break off relations with the Government of Tunis, and the German Consul was now charged with the interests of Russian subjects in the Principality.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 325.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 705.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 19, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose to your Lordship, in translation, by Mr. Michell, an article from the "Exchange Gazette," expressing surprise at the absence of any official information in regard to the insurrection of certain tribes in the Caucasus.

Since the publication of this article I have seen a short notification in the "Journal de St. Petersbourg," stating that the revolt had been entirely put down, and that all was quiet. But I do not attach much value to this notification, as it bears no official character.

It is also impossible to obtain any accurate information here as to what has passed, or is passing, in the Caucasus, and it is natural that the absence of official news should create uneasiness in the public mind.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 325.

Substance of an Article in the "Exchange Gazette" of November 29/December 11 1877.

(Translation.)

THE "Exchange Gazette" of November 16/December 28, 1877, in a leading article, surveying the present military position of Russia in Bulgaria and Asia Minor, concludes the article by the following observation in regard to the absence of official news from the Caucasus:—

"It is remarkable," it observes, "that up to the present time we are totally without any official information in regard to the revolt of the Caucasian tribes. All that we learn on this subject is gathered from casual private and newspaper correspondence. From these sources we learn that the revolt has assumed very large proportions. If the insurrection has been quelled at some points (which could have only been done by the aid of a large force), there is yet much to be done. We are further informed that a Holy War has been proclaimed; that Imams have been elected, &c. In a word, facts of a most alarming nature have come to our knowledge. We are, however, in ignorance of the exact state of affairs in the Caucasus."

No. 326.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 707.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 19, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship a *précis*, in translation, by Mr. Michell, of the following articles from the Russian press bearing on the present war:—

1. From the "Golos," recommending Turkey to conclude peace at once directly with Russia.

2. From the "Golos," "Novoie Vremia," St. Petersburgh "Vedomosti," and the "Exchange Gazette," giving their various opinions on the fall of Plevna, and the results to which it may lead.

3. An article from the "Golos" on the isolation of England.

4. From the "Moscow Gazette" of the 7/19th December, on the policy of Austria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 326.

Précis of an Article in the "Golos."

ADVICE TO TURKEY TO CONCLUDE IMMEDIATE PEACE WITH RUSSIA.—The "Golos" of the 7/19th December, 1877, in a leading article, recommends Turkey to conclude peace at once with Russia. The conditions that Russia will demand, it states, will progressively increase with each victory. The fall of Plevna entails, it asserts, the loss of the whole of Bulgaria, and a victory on the other side of the Balkans will involve the loss to the Porte of Roumelia; the seizure of Constantinople, and the exclusion of the Turks out of Europe, may be the final result of Ottoman obduracy at the present moment. It therefore warns Turkey in time, and advises her not to be influenced by the delusive hope of obtaining assistance from England.

Inclosure 2 in No. 326.

Précis of Opinions of the Russian Press.

OPINIONS OF THE RUSSIAN PRESS ON THE FALL OF PLEVNA.—The "Russki Mir" is of opinion that the fall of Plevna only marks the beginning of a new epoch in the campaign against Turkey, which it considers must be conducted to a satisfactory end. No question of peace, it considers, can be entertained until the vexatious Eastern Question is solved before the gates of Constantinople. Neither England nor Austria are able or willing to

arrest the course of military events, and foreign intervention would be too late at the present moment, and even if attempted, must prove fruitless in result.

The "Novoi Vremya" expresses a hope that with the fall of Plevna all obstacles will be removed for the march of the Russian army to Constantinople, where terms of peace must be dictated. It further states that Russia will not tolerate any foreign mediation, nor allow anyone to reap what she herself has sown. It asserts that the object of the war consisted chiefly in the furtherance of Russia's own national interests and to ensure her own future, the welfare of the Bulgarians being altogether secondary. Russia, it proclaims, must dominate over the East, and Russian efforts must first of all benefit Russia.

The "Golos" is also jubilant over the fall of Plevna and the capture of Osman Pasha's army. It does not, however, consider that this victory ensures the cessation of hostilities. It is of opinion that the Turkish strongholds in Eastern Bulgaria must first be captured before the Russian army can safely cross the Balkans. It anticipates no serious foreign complication until the commencement of peace negotiations, when a certain amount of opposition on the part of England and Austria must be expected. This, however, it thinks Russian diplomacy will be able to remove with success. It thinks that henceforward no anti-Russian coalition can be formed so long as the policy of Russia continues to be founded on an observance of the legitimate interests of the two powerful States on her frontier, which policy, it declares, forms the foundations of the Three Emperors.

The "St. Petersburg Vedomisti" considers that the condition of Turkey is not yet altogether hopeless, inasmuch as she still maintains possession of four strong fortresses in Eastern Bulgaria. Russia, it declares, is not actuated by a desire to annihilate Turkey as an independent State: a continuation of the war by the Porte to the last extremity is therefore unnecessary. Russia, it says, will agree to a termination of hostilities if favourable terms be proposed by Turkey.

The "Exchange Gazette," while expressing great joy at the fall of Plevna and the capture of Osman Pasha's army, expresses a fervent hope that this brilliant achievement of Russian arms will serve as a prelude to a solid and favourable peace for Russia.

Inclosure 3 in No. 326.

Extract from the "Golos" of December 7/19, 1877.

(Translation.)

THE "Golos" of the 7/19th December declares that the present isolation of England renders any efforts she may make on behalf of Turkey completely insignificant, and that the attitude assumed by the neutral Powers from the commencement of the present struggle in the East affords them no plea for mediation or intervention. The following are its remarks on this subject *in extenso*:—

"The complete isolation of England—a fact which henceforth admits of no doubt—and the open declaration made last week by Count Andrassy would considerably diminish the political importance of any combination in favour of Turkey, even if Lord Beaconsfield succeeded in craftily inveigling the country into such a war. Without continental allies England will have to confine herself, *nolens volens*, to platonic demonstrations, though they should be even of a martial character. The appearance of the British fleet in the Bosphorus, and perchance the landing of, comparatively speaking, an inconsiderable detachment of British troops at Gallipoli, is all that can be expected, and that only as an extreme measure, while the possibility of such intimidations will, of course, not stop Russia half-way, and will be scarcely effectual in diminishing the feeling which the fall of Plevna and the surrender of the whole army of Osman Pasha—the flower of the Sultan's troops—has created at Constantinople.

"Now that the results of the great and decisive victory gained by the Russian troops at Plevna will make themselves felt at the European seat of war, the Western Cabinets will doubtlessly renew their diplomatic activity, and it must be expected that rumours of mediation and intervention will pour in from all sides. These rumours, however, must be received with the greatest caution and suspicion. The position assumed by the Western Powers from the commencement of the war between Russia and Turkey affords them no plea for mediation, much less for interference. Russia may and does recognize the right of Europe to participate in the decision of the question as to the reorganization of the

Balkan Peninsula, but this question can only be discussed when the Porte declares herself vanquished, and for meddling in the negotiations which must precede this declaration the neutral Powers have neither the pretext nor the right."

Inclosure 4 in No. 326.

Remarks of the "Moscow Gazette" on the Policy pursued by Austria.

IN the course of the last few days we have received three official declarations in regard to the foreign policy of the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet: two speeches delivered by Count Andrassy, and the speech of the Emperor himself. As a matter of course the import of the three speeches was the same. It went to show that the whole policy of Austro-Hungary is directed to secure by peaceable measures the legitimate interests of the monarchy. While insisting that Austro-Hungary is vitally interested in the solution of the Eastern Question, Count Andrassy openly states that the interests of the country will be secured by the fact of the Government having preferred to seek an attainment of their object by way of an amicable understanding, instead of by going to war. Such a position, assumed by the Austro-Hungarian Government, gives every probability to the rumours, issuing from well-informed circles at Vienna, to the effect that Austro-Hungary, instead of obstructing the conclusion of a direct peace between Russia and Turkey, will, on the contrary, see in that consummation the means of ensuring her own interests. It could not, however, be otherwise than this if we consider that Austria must either have attached herself to the alliance existing between Russia and Germany, or have placed herself in hostile opposition to them. Austria, it is evident, could not reckon on an alliance with France; on the other hand, an alliance with England would scarcely afford her sufficient support to make her determine on a war, and, moreover, an alliance between Austria and England would, in all probability, have led to the admission of Italy, in place of Austria, to the compact of the Emperors. In the event, therefore, of the Vienna Cabinet adopting a line of policy hostile to the Russo-German alliance, Austria ran the risk of losing very much without ensuring, at the same time, any positive benefits; whereas, by attaching herself to the alliance she might gain something. But having once joined the alliance Austria must adhere to it, as secession from it would entail all the consequences of a policy of abstention.

No. 327.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 708.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December* 19, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a translation, by Mr. Michell, from the "Official Gazette," of the 24th November / 6th December, of an Order issued by the Grand Duke Michael, Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Caucasus, forming a new region of Kars, within his Vice-Royalty, and the application to it of military government, as prescribed by the Regulations of his Imperial Highness, dated June 19th / 1st of this year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 327.

Extract from the "Official Gazette" of 24th November / 6th December 1877.

(Translation.)

FORMATION OF A NEW REGION OF KARS.—The "Official Gazette," of the 24th November / 6th December, 1877, contains the following Order issued on the 19th / 31st November, 1877, by the Grand Duke Michael, Commander-in-chief of the Army of the Caucasus.

"Recognizing the necessity of forming a separate region of Kars within the confines of Asiatic Turkey and of the sandjaks of Kars and Chaldjoi, I hereby order the adoption, from the 1st / 13th November of the present year, of the Order of Administration provided for the government of regions. The temporary regulations confirmed by me in May and June last for the military-national administration in Asiatic Turkey are to be suspended from

the above date. In matters relating to the internal administration of the region, the local authorities are to be guided by the regulations promulgated by me on the 19th / 31st June last, on the subject of the military-national administration of the population."

No. 328.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 714.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December* 19, 1877.

ON receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 17th instant, I addressed the note of which a copy is inclosed, to M. de Giers, bringing to his Excellency's notice the communication of Musurus Pasha, respecting the reported intention of the Russian Military Commander in Asia to send to Erzeroum 5,000 or 6,000 Turkish prisoners, sick and wounded, now at Kars.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 328.

Lord A. Loftus to M. de Giers.

M. le Conseiller Privé, *St. Petersburgh, December* 18, 1877.

HER Majesty's Government have been informed by the Turkish Ambassador in London that, from intelligence received by the Porte from Monkhtar Pasha, it is the intention of the Russian military authorities in Asia to send to Erzeroum from 5,000 to 6,000 Turkish prisoners, sick and wounded, now at Kars.

The Porte considers itself authorized to protest against this measure should it be put in execution, both on account of the hardships and dangers to which the transport of these prisoners of war at this season of the year expose them, and also on the grounds that it would be contrary to the VIth Article of the Geneva Convention.

I am instructed by the Earl of Derby, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to bring this communication to the knowledge of the Imperial Government, in the hope that it will be taken into their favorable consideration.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) A. LOFTUS.

No. 329.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 192. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December* 16, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying English translation of the Proclamation issued two days ago by the Prince of Servia, as a sort of War Manifesto to his people.

This document is dated the 13th instant, and has been translated most carefully by Mr. Vice-Consul Marshall.

Whilst a similar Manifesto, dated 30th June, 1876, professed to commence war, though still adhering to the principle of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, the attempt of waging hostilities with a view to secure independence and to disintegrate the Empire is only put forward as the chief and principal aim of this new war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

Inclosure in No. 329.

War Manifesto of the Prince of Servia.

Proclamation.

(Translation.)

To my beloved People!

IN my Proclamation of $\frac{\text{February 21}}{\text{March 5}}$ of this year, I announced to my beloved people that the defence of the holy cause, for which we were last year obliged to draw the sword, had passed into more powerful hands. But since the time that Servia concluded peace with the Ottoman Porte the Turkish race has enriched its history with new unheard-of horrors. Rapine, waste, and slaughter to-day fill all the provinces of the Turkish Empire, but more especially do the Turks vent their wrath on all who bear the Servian name. The Mussulman fanaticism, inflamed with vengeance, vents itself especially on those suffering brethren of ours who at the time of the war found refuge and protection in Servia, although by Article II of the Treaty we concluded on February $\frac{26}{10}$ with the Ottoman Porte a complete amnesty is stipulated for them. Relying on the good faith of the International Convention, we induced the greater part of the martyrs to return to their hearths; but having returned with confidence in our advice they were, alas! under various pretexts, subjected anew to tortures and violence by their Mahommedan oppressors. In vain were the steps my Government took at Constantinople against this flagrant infraction of the Treaty. The Ottoman Porte left the fresh acts of violence unpunished, and trampled on the solemn promise it had made us.

Servians! after such a breach of the Treaty which the Porte concluded with us we are no longer obliged to remain in the trying condition which changed us from champions of freedom to patient spectators of those ruthless endeavours by which the Porte is evidently bent on extirpating the Servian race. The measure of the Turkish atrocities is such that Servia will now no longer remain a quiet looker-on, neither can she, without abasement, remain any longer bound to a Power which derives its might from devastation, fire, and blood, and which, in the fury of its fanaticism, already threatens our Principality.

Although Servia has preserved a most correct attitude towards Turkey, the Ottoman Porte again begins to prepare new dangers for our country. Besides secret conspiracies which it fosters against our internal security, the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs openly threatens us, saying that the Porte has innumerable ways of harming Servia, although she may not be *pro forma* at war with us.

Servians! since the Porte assumes such a threatening tone towards us at the moment when it is hard pressed by the army of one of the most powerful States, it is evident that we must not let the present opportunity pass without trying once and for all to insure our future. No; the struggle with our hereditary foe was not concluded with last year's campaign. It would neither be glorious nor profitable for us were we to occupy ourselves with the works of peace instead of endeavouring, so far as lies within our power, to remove the dangers which beset the Servian race and to fulfil our national task.

And although the brave Russian army needs not our assistance to crown with success the holy cause which the Emperor Alexander has taken under his mighty protection, nothing in the world can free us from the duty which the Servian nation has to fulfil as a member of the community of Eastern Christian nations, which Servia must fulfil towards herself and her race.

Nations cannot attain true freedom until they have purchased it by their own exertions, and, if necessary, by their blood. Great deeds like that undertaken last year by us are not begun in order to stop half-way. That were indeed a pusillanimous policy and a lukewarm patriotism, for which posterity would blame us, for which our suffering brethren would execrate us, and of which we ourselves should hereafter repent.

The blessed spirits of our heroes who fell in last year's war would renounce us when they saw from above that we were indifferent whilst rivers of blood were shed on our frontier, that we undertook nothing to fulfil their legacy of fighting the enemy who devastated our beautiful and fertile land when the exigencies of war did not demand it.

Only by steadfastness and perseverance can we reap the fruits of the noble and courageous attempt which cost us such extraordinary efforts and enormous sacrifices. We have had time given us to rest until now, and we were entitled to take it. If the enemy could bring superior forces last year against the Servian Principality, to-day, taking the field, we find there a Russian army crowned with glory, we find there our heroic Montenegrin brethren, and our valiant Roumanian neighbours, who have crossed the Danube, and fight gallantly for their independence and the liberty of the oppressed Christians.

Servians! we take up arms to-day in a holy, national, and Christian cause. After the example of my grandfather, behold I place myself again at the head of the armed Servian nation. On the banner which Obrenovits IV unfurls again are written, "Liberty and National Independence." Under this banner you have already given splendid proofs of your patriotism and self-devotion.

We now take a bold step; let us join hands with those of our brethren from whom we have been separated since the day of Kossovo.

To-day or never has struck the hour in which we must, once and for all, complete the great national task which the heroes of Takova so gloriously began, and which we last year recommenced.

And so, heroes, forward, beside the victorious banners of the Czar liberator, with faith in God Almighty, the Protector of Right, for the liberation of our oppressed brethren and for the independence of our country Servia!

Forward, heroes; it is the will of God.

(Signed) MILAN M. OBRENOVITS IV, e.p.,
Prince of Servia.

Belgrade, December $\frac{1}{13}$, 1877.

No. 330.

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, December 24.)

(No. 128.)

Sir, *Buda-Pesth, December 20, 1877.*

AS I have already informed your Excellency by telegraph, the Hungarian and German newspapers published here this morning, comment upon the news from London with general satisfaction.

The "Pester Lloyd" devotes a long article to the subject, winding up as follows:—"With sincere satisfaction we hail these signs of the awakening of the British nation; they indicate the establishment of a new European combination, which will oppose the sovereignty of morality, freedom, and right, to the brutal dominion of revolution and violence; and for us there is no doubt as to the camp in which Austria-Hungary will be found, as there is but one camp in which she can be found."

The "Ellenor" says that England has not one, but a hundred grounds for taking a decided line against Russia, and hopes that her action will not stop short at a demonstration.

The "Kélét Népé" says that England's action will be a check to Germany, and must withdraw France from Russophil tendencies. The consequence will be the recovery by Austria-Hungary of her freedom of action.

The "Neues Pester Journal" regards the new attitude of England as a blow at the Triple Alliance, and says that she will find other Powers on her side, and among them, of course, Austria-Hungary.

The "Egylertes" regrets that action has been delayed till after the fall of Plevna, and hopes that England will be energetic and lose no more time.

The "Pester Journal" says that the British Lion, which has been slumbering and allowing himself to be tricked and teased, has merely to rouse himself in order to frighten his enemy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 331.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 572.) *Pera, December 23, 1877, 4·10 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

CONSUL GREEN telegraphs following, dated 21st:—

"As some authorities on the law of nations are of opinion that a blockade can only be established against coasts in the hands of an enemy, I have thought it right to ask Commander-in-chief to inform Porte that (if?) the country between the mouth of the Boyana and Durazzo is in any way comprised in the circuit of the Montenegrin operations, it is neither well judged nor (expected?) to right, and Smyrna or Salonica might with equal right be proclaimed blockaded. The men-of-war in insurgent waters are all employed in watching the progress of the Montenegrins near Antivari and the continuance on the present conditions of blockade of Durazzo is only likely to give rise to complications with neighbouring States.

"Sent home."

No. 332.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 574.) *Pera, December 24, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING telegram has been received from General Kemball, dated yesterday:—

"Mukhtar Pasha has telegraphed to me, Russians occupied yesterday Hintz, and threaten Ilije. He has ordered that all ammunition and stores *en route* to Erzeroum should be stopped."

(Secret.)

Porte is not satisfied that Mukhtar Pasha is determined to hold Erzeroum to the last, to which it attaches great importance, and may probably recall him, giving the command to Ismail Pasha (or?) Hafiz Pasha. This would, I think, be an unfortunate step.

No. 333.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 575. Confidential.) *Pera, December 24, 1877, 7·5 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

AUSTRIAN Ambassador, instructed by Count Andrassy, has communicated verbally to the Grand Vizier a statement made by the Servian Agent at Vienna that Servia having determined not to send her troops across the Drina, he would request the Austrian Government to ask the Porte not to permit its army to cross that river into Servia. Count Andrassy replied that as Servia had entered upon the present war without previously consulting the Austrian Government, he considered, and would even make the statement in writing, that the Porte was entitled to perfect liberty of military action, and that in the event of the Servian troops ever crossing the Drina into Bosnia and the Herzegovina, the Austrian Government would take measures to oppose such a proceeding.

Grand Vizier expressed much satisfaction with this communication.

No. 334.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24.)

Odessa, December 24, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my despatch No. 83,* steam-ship "Russia" left yesterday afternoon, on an unknown expedition, said to be very dangerous.

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* Not yet received in Department.

No. 335.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 404. Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 24, 1877.*

THE Austrian Ambassador called upon me to-day and read to me a telegram from Count Andrassy, stating that your Excellency had intimated to him in confidence that I had been led to doubt whether the Austrian Government really attached any value to the closing of the Straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. Your Excellency had not, however, indicated the source from which these doubts had arisen.

Count Andrassy hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not give any credence to these reports, of the origin of which the Austrian Government had not even a suspicion. In any case Count Beust was authorized to inform me that the views of the Cabinet of Vienna on the point in question had undergone no change.

I thanked his Excellency for this communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 336.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 886.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 24, 1877.*

HER Majesty's Government have delayed replying to the Circular from the Porte, dated the 12th instant, inviting the Powers to interpose their good offices for the restoration of peace, until they could become acquainted with the views entertained of that appeal by the Governments to which it was severally addressed.

It soon became evident that there was little prospect of joint mediation being agreed upon, and the refusal of the German Government rendered it impracticable.

Her Majesty's Government nevertheless feel, that after the urgent representations of the Porte, and the willingness expressed by the Sultan to ask for peace, they would not be justified in abstaining from making an effort to initiate negotiations for peace; and they cannot but hope that the initiative thus taken may meet with the support of the other Powers, who must be equally desirous with Her Majesty's Government to assist in bringing the war to a close.

I have accordingly to authorize your Excellency to ask the Porte whether the Sultan is willing that Her Majesty's Government shall inquire of the Russian Government if the Emperor will entertain overtures for peace.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 337.

The Earl of Derby to Musurus Pasha.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, December 24, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 20th instant, in which, by order of your Government, you transmit to me a copy of a telegraphic despatch which you have received from his Excellency Server Pasha, relative to the declaration of war notified to the Sublime Porte by the Servian Agent at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 338.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 25.)

(No. 575.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 25, 1877.*

TURKISH Minister at Athens telegraphs that Greek troops are being concentrated at Chalcis, Lamia, and Santa Maura.

No. 339.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 25.)

(No. 577.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 25, 1877.*

FOLLOWING from Consul Green, dated yesterday:—

"Report in town is that the Montenegrins attacked and took Dulcigno during past night. Pasha says that the enemy has only occupied surrounding heights after some fighting."

No. 340.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 25, 1877, 5·25 P.M.*

IN reply to your telegram of the 22nd instant, Her Majesty's Government cannot advise compromise as to Italian vessels and their cargoes. If they must be released, it were better to do so under protest, in consequence of attitude of Italian Government pending discussion.

No. 341.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 890.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 25, 1877.*

ON the receipt of your Excellency's telegraphic despatch of the 22nd instant, reporting a proposal made by the Porte for the release, on certain conditions, of the two Italian ships seized for violation of the Black Sea blockade, I telegraphed to you that Her Majesty's Government were not of opinion that these conditions would be satisfactory, being to the effect that the vessels themselves should be released, whilst their cargoes should remain at Constantinople.

I added that if the vessels must be released it would be more desirable that this should be done under protest, having in view the attitude which had been taken by the Italian Government during the discussion of the question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 342.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 26.)

(No 578.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 25, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I am authorized by the Grand Vizier to state that the Sultan is willing that Her Majesty's Government should inquire of the Russian Government if the (Emperor will?) entertain overtures for peace. His Highness informs me that an appeal in this sense has been already addressed to Her Majesty's Government through Musurus Pasha.

No. 343.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 579.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 26, 1877.*

FOLLOWING from Consul Green, dated Scutari yesterday:—

"Greek Consul, who only established post here October last, has received telegraphic orders to withdraw, with excuse that he has asked for leave of absence."

No. 344.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, December 26, 1877.*

AUSTRIAN Representative made yesterday a declaration to the Servian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that the Austrian Government would observe neutrality between Servia and Turkey as long as former should abstain from every act of aggression or encouragement to insurrection with regard to both Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

No. 345.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 892.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 26, 1877.*

I APPROVE your Excellency's proceedings, as reported in your despatch No. 1457 of the 8th instant, relative to the condemnation and execution of a Bulgarian named Dragoilo Nidelcha Radush.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 346.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 893.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 26, 1877.*

I HAVE to express to your Excellency my approval of your language to Server Pasha with reference to the questions between the Porte and Crete, as reported in your despatch No. 1479, Confidential, of the 13th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 347.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 1483.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of the note addressed this morning by the Servian Agent to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, declaring that Servia is in a state of war with Turkey.

An example could with difficulty be found in history of a war entered upon in a more cowardly manner, and justified by more frivolous pretexts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 347.

M. Christich to Server Pasha.

LE Soussigné, Agent Diplomatique de la Principauté de Serbie auprès de la Sublime Porte, a l'honneur de porter ce qui suit à la connaissance de son Excellence Server Pacha.

Le Protocole de Paix du 16 Février de la présente année ayant stipulé une amnistie pleine et entière pour tous les gens compromis dans des événements antérieurs, le Gouvernement Serbe avait fait rentrer dans leurs foyers un grand nombre de malheureux sujets Ottomans qui s'étaient réfugié sur le territoire Serbe. Mais en dépit de la teneur du susdit Protocole ces réfugiés furent à leur retour continuellement exposés à des nouvelles persécutions et à des mauvais traitements de toutes sortes, tant de la part de leurs concitoyens Musulmans que de celle des autorités Impériales elles-mêmes. Son Excellence

Server Pacha a sans doute présentes à la mémoire les fréquentes réclamations que le Soussigné, d'ordre de son Gouvernement, a faites auprès de la Sublime Porte contre ces infractions manifestes à la Convention de la Paix. Mais le Soussigné a le vif regret de constater que ces démarches n'ont pu avoir aucun résultat satisfaisant.

D'autre part le Gouvernement Princier a acquis la conviction que la Sublime Porte, contrairement aux lois internationales, et sans tenir aucun compte des règles de bon voisinage, travaille depuis quelque temps surtout à compromettre la tranquillité et l'ordre intérieur de la Principauté en prêtant un appui ouvert en armes et en d'autres moyens d'action aux agissements des conspirateurs du dehors qui voudraient troubler la sécurité de la Principauté.

Pour tous ces motifs le Gouvernement Princier a cru devoir rappeler son Agent auprès de la Sublime Porte, et lui a signifié l'ordre de quitter immédiatement Constantinople, la Principauté de Serbie se considérant désormais en état de guerre avec la Sublime Porte.

Le Soussigné, &c.

(Signé) CHRISTICH.

Constantinople, le 4/16 Décembre, 1877.

No. 348.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 27.*)

(No. 1485.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 15, 1877.

IN my telegram No. 546 of to-day, I informed your Lordship that, owing to the prevailing distress and to the depreciation in the paper currency, there was great dissatisfaction with the Government in Constantinople, and that some persons apprehended serious agitation and disturbances, which might be directed even against the Sultan himself. But, I added, that for the present there was no outward sign of this discontent. I beg to inclose a Memorandum on the subject from a person who has generally furnished me with very trustworthy information.

It is believed that if riots do take place they will be caused by the high price of bread, and the closing of their shops by the bakers and the "Bakals," or the small dealers in provisions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 348.

Memorandum on the State of Feeling in Constantinople.

PARMI les Musulmans le mécontentement est *général*, c'est-à-dire qu'il s'étend à toutes les classes, depuis le simple caïdji jusqu'au fonctionnaire. Jusqu'à présent la mauvaise humeur du peuple s'était principalement portée sur le Gouvernement, c'est-à-dire sur les Ministres et sur les hauts fonctionnaires de l'Etat; il n'y avait guère que la coterie de Mourad qui osât s'attaquer au Sultan lui-même. Mais depuis quelques jours les choses sont bien changées, car l'on s'en prend au Sultan lui-même, que l'on accuse d'incapacité et de bêteté. Quelques-uns vont plus loin encore, et déclarent que le sang d'Osman est appauvré et dégénéré, et que le pays ne saurait se relever tant qu'un membre de cette dynastie sera sur le trône. Si étrange et si invraisemblable que puisse paraître ce renseignement il n'en est pas moins de la plus rigoureuse exactitude. Quiconque veut s'en assurer peut le faire facilement. Il suffit de parcourir Stamboul, et d'engager familièrement la conversation sur des affaires publiques avec quelque Musulman que ce soit, pris au hasard, à tous les dégrés de l'échelle sociale, et l'on entendra le même langage, plus ou moins accentué, suivant le tempérament et la position des gens, mais toujours aussi significatif, au moins en ce qui touche le Sultan Abdul Hamid.

Les indices sont de nature à appeler l'attention, car ils pourraient être le prélude d'un mouvement populaire dirigé contre le Gouvernement et contre le Sultan lui-même. Il est vrai, et c'est ce qui doit rassurer pour le moment que cette légion de mécontents manque de chef. Mais à un moment donné ce chef pourrait se trouver, et la paix publique serait alors gravement compromise.

Des placards menaçants ont encore été affichés sur les murs de Constantinople, et un pamphlet a été publié clandestinement. La police fait tous les efforts pour que ces manifestations restent secrètes, et il est probable que la Porte les démentirait, aussi bien que l'état général des esprits, en admettant qu'elle soit suffisamment renseigné à ce sujet.

No. 349.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 27.)

(No. 1489.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 17, 1877.

MR. RASSAM'S report upon the country which he visited after leaving Van, including the mountains inhabited by some of the most important Kurdish tribes and by the Nestorians, has not yet reached me; but I have received a private letter from him from Mosul. He describes the state of things owing to the war as most deplorable. The populations, Christian as well as Mussulman, are everywhere reduced to the greatest misery and distress on account of the constant demands made upon them for the army in food, beasts of transport, and, in the case of the Mahommedans, in men. Owing to the want of troops and police, complete anarchy appears to reign in the districts through which he passed. The Turkish authorities are, for the most part, ready and desirous to do all in their power to protect and assist the unfortunate people under their charge; but they are powerless to do so. Mr. Rassam fears that, owing to the state of things he describes, the fields will remain untilled, and that a scarcity of food will be added to the misery which now prevails. He writes that he "met thousands of poor ragged Kurds and Nestorians proceeding southwards, and when he asked them why they were leaving their country they replied that they had lost all they had." In the district of Albar, in Bash Kale, he found the inhabitants, who are Armenians and Nestorians, in very great distress, the Persian Kurds having plundered and destroyed all their villages.

Mr. Rassam visited Mar Shamun, the Nestorian Patriarch. He learnt that there was no truth in the report that had reached the Turkish authorities at Van that the Nestorians were in rebellion, although they had been unable to pay considerable arrears of taxes. He describes them as more powerful than they formerly were, and able to resist any attempt the Kurds might make to invade their valleys. M. Rassam was led to believe that the taxes required from them are excessive, and that they are levied upon no regular system. He has made private representations on the subject to the Pasha of Van.

Mr. Rassam appears to have been able to settle a quarrel between the Nestorians and the Harkee Kurds which threatened to lead to bloodshed; and I have no doubt that his visit to the Nestorian vallies has done much good, by promoting a friendly feeling between the Christians and Mussulmans.

Mr. Rassam has brought to the notice of the Governor-General of Van the lamentable condition of the country which he has visited, and of its inhabitants, in the hope that something may be done for them. But until this war, which is bringing such infinite misery upon this unhappy country, is at an end, there is little or no hope of any improvement. Those who have approved or provoked the war are probably little aware of the number of its innocent victims. There is, perhaps, scarcely a part of the Empire in which its effects are not directly or indirectly felt, and in which both Christians and Mussulmans are not exposed to the most cruel sufferings on account of it. Mr. Rassam writes in warm terms of the civility and kindness that he has received from all the authorities, and "from Turks, Kurds, and Christians alike," during his journey.

I expect to receive his official report very shortly.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 350.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 27.)

(No. 1492. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 18, 1877.

IT had been decided by the Council of Ministers, as I telegraphed to your lordship on the 15th instant, to address a Circular to the Powers, protesting against the conduct of Servia in entering upon the war and wantonly attacking Turkey, and stating that the Porte had deposed Prince Milan. The draft of the Circular, which had been prepared in that sense, was, however, subsequently modified, and the Prince is declared to be "en

état de déchéance." I understand that this modification was made on two grounds. It was considered, in the first place, that if the deposition of the Prince is declared, a successor will have to be found for him, in order that the Principality may not be left without a proper Administration; and, secondly, that it would be as well to avoid the humiliation of having to recognize Prince Milan again after having once formally deposed him.

A Proclamation to the Servian people has also been prepared, in which they are called upon not to engage in a rebellion against their Sovereign, and to judge of themselves whether they should continue to give their confidence to Prince Milan and his counsellors, who are about to bring upon them incalculable misfortunes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 351.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 1493. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 18, 1877.

SAID PASHA brought me this morning from the Sultan a telegram addressed to His Majesty by Suleiman Pasha, a translation of which I have the honour to inclose, relating to alleged outrages committed upon Turkish women by the Russians at Matcha. His Excellency said that the Sultan had received the telegram with the greatest indignation, and had exclaimed, in the first outbreak of anger, that as such things were permitted by civilized Europe, there was nothing left to him to do but to call upon the whole Mahommedan world to resent the insults and dishonour that were now being heaped upon their religion and those who professed it.

I told Said Pasha that I could not but believe that the report which had reached Suleiman Pasha was untrue, or, at any rate, that it must be greatly exaggerated, and I begged him to do his best to calm the Sultan. He replied that the evidence of outrages and cruelties committed by the Russians on the Mussulman population was so complete, and came from so many different quarters, that His Majesty could not do otherwise than give credit to it, and was deeply impressed with the barbarous manner in which, according to the accounts that reached him, the war was being carried on.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 351.

Suleiman Pasha to His Majesty the Sultan.

(Traduction.)
(Télégraphique.) *Le* $\frac{5}{17}$ *Décembre*, 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de rapporter ce qui suit :—

"Selon le rapport d'un caporal qui, ayant été blessé dans la bataille de Matschka et fait prisonnier par les Russes, a pu plus tard se sauver, il y aurait dans le susdit village occupé par les Russes 200 femmes Musulmanes affectées au service particulier des troupes. Avec cela, pour leur infliger un déshonneur spécial, on les fait promener avec leurs parties sexuelles à découvert et leurs figures sans voile.

"En outre les Russes, afin de profiter des circonstances de la guerre, ont fait coiffer de la culotte rouge une partie de leurs troupes, et ils ont tué publiquement deux Circassiens qui avaient été blessés et faits prisonniers.

"En même temps comme les hospitaux de Roustchouk portant l'emblème du croissant rouge ne sont par respectés par les bombes Russes, j'ai envoyé un délégué spécial au Czarewitz avec instructions de lui faire part de cet état de choses, et de demander un remède, ainsi que d'éclaircir l'Article spécial de la Convention de Genève dont le sens est resté obscure.

"Mon délégué est chargé aussi de demander à Son Altesse des éclaircissements sur les trois choses désagréables rapportées par le caporal ci-dessus mentionnées."

No. 352.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 1495.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 18, 1877.

IN my despatch No. 1459 of the 8th instant I informed your Lordship that the Armenian Patriarch and notables had decided upon answering to the appeal made to them by the Sultan to enrol themselves in the Civic Guard for the defence of the country. It appears that since then great efforts have been made to induce them to revoke this decision, and I understand that at a meeting held yesterday, at which a large number of the Armenian clergy were present, it was reversed by a considerable majority, to the surprise and vexation of the Patriarch who, having informed the Porte that the Armenians were ready to serve, now finds himself in a very embarrassing position.

I informed your Lordship in my despatch No. 1435 of the 3rd instant that I had reason to believe that Prince Reuss had strongly urged upon the Patriarch not to allow the Armenian community to comply with the Sultan's invitation. It is by no means improbable that his Highness' counsels and warnings have led the Armenian clergy to reverse the decision they had previously come to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 353.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 1497.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 19, 1877.

IT is the Sultan's intention, I have reason to believe, to raise several of his Christian subjects to the rank of "Mushir," and to name some of them Governors of provinces. Two of them will probably be Karatheodori Effendi and Oannes Effendi.

The former, a Greek, is now Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and is a man of very considerable abilities and experience. He is closely related through his wife with Musurus Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 354.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 1500.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December* 19, 1877.

I HAVE seen Addocides (Costaki) Pasha, who leaves to-day or to-morrow morning for Crete, as one of the Commissioners for the settlement, if possible, of the grievances of the Christians of that island. I fear that his mission comes rather late, but he seems disposed to deal justly and liberally with the questions which will be submitted to him and his colleague. He informs me that the instructions he has received from the Grand Vizier are entirely in that spirit.

I have recommended Addocides Pasha to the good offices of Consul Sandwith, from whom, I trust, he will receive every support in the discharge of his difficult and delicate mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 355.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 360.)
My Lord, *Athens, December* 17, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I have communicated to the Hellenic Minister for Foreign Affairs the information conveyed to me in your Lordship's telegram of the 15th instant as to the intentions of the Ottoman Government with respect to Crete. My object in so doing was that M. Tricoupi should make use of the

information in question to prevent, if possible, an insurrectionary movement in that island.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 356.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 361.) *Athens, December 17, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive the telegram which your Lordship addressed to me on the 15th instant yesterday morning, informing me of the intention of the Ottoman Government to send Commissioners to Crete. M. Tricoupi having told me that he was endeavouring to persuade those Cretan Chiefs who were in Athens not to return to Crete, as their presence there would promote an insurrection, I thought it might be of use to communicate to his Excellency the information contained in your Lordship's telegram. I accordingly addressed to him a letter, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, in which I stated that I hastened to communicate the information I had received from your Lordship, in the hope that he would make use of it in his arguments of persuasion, to which arguments I thought it must give much additional force.

From reports, however, which have reached me, I fear that many Cretans have already left Greece, and I am informed that they have been incited to leave by being told that unless Crete was in a state of insurrection when negotiations for peace were commenced, the cause of the Cretans would be neglected.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 356.

Mr. Wyndham to M. Tricoupi.

Athens, December 16, 1877.

My dear M. Tricoupi,

I HAVE this morning received a telegram from Lord Derby, in which he informs me that the Porte is about to send to Crete Commissioners, and that one of these Commissioners is a Christian, by name Kiezi Effendi, and who, it appears, is favourably known there. Lord Derby further stated that the Ottoman Government seems inclined to do all that can be required of them to give satisfaction to the Cretans.

As you have told me that you were endeavouring by persuasion to prevent the Cretan Chiefs in Athens from returning to Crete, as their presence there would promote insurrection, I hasten to communicate this intelligence to you, in the hope that you will make use of it in your arguments of persuasion, to which arguments I think it must give much additional force.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM

No. 357.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(No. 364. Confidential.) *Athens, December 20, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 328 and 329 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that M. Tricoupi has expressed to M. Tissot, the French Minister, the idea that in certain eventualities a Greek force should enter Turkey "for the purpose of maintaing order," and that M. Tissot has asked him how far north in Albania the Greek Government aspired to extend their frontiers, and that M. Tricoupi mentioned the River Matt. M. Tissot gave me this information confidentially to-day, and he expressed himself as of opinion that some communications have passed between Italy and Greece as to Albania, and that Italy had some object in view with regard to that province.

Your Lordship's attention will no doubt have been called to a letter in the "Times"

of the 7th instant, headed "Italy, Greece, and Turkey," and which hints at some exchange of ideas having taken place between Italy and Greece, and states that M. Tricoupi, when pressed by Italy as to the line to which his country thought its share of territory should extend, mentioned the River Matt, the same river he had mentioned to M. Tissot.

I have not been able as yet to discover through what channel communications have been carried on between Italy and Greece on this subject; but I think, and so does the French Minister, as I have mentioned, that some exchange of ideas has taken place.

I have observed of late that the Court treat Count Maffei, the Italian Minister, with marked civility.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 358.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

My Lord, *Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 26 Décembre, 1877.*

J'AI l'honneur de transmettre ci-joint à votre Excellence copie d'une dépêche télégraphique que je viens de recevoir de son Excellence Server Pacha au sujet des blessés ou malades militaires Ottomans tombés au pouvoir des Russes à Kars.

Cette communication constate que les tristes appréhensions exprimées dans la dépêche télégraphique du Ministère Impérial des Affairs Etrangères, datée du 12 de ce mois, et dont j'ai eu l'honneur de donner communication à votre Excellence le 14, sur le sort réservé à nos soldats blessés ou malades ont été malheureusement réalisées; que, sur 2,000 d'entre eux envoyé de Kars à Erzéroum, une moitié a succombé en route au froid et à la fatigue, l'autre moitié étant arrivée à Erzéroum dans l'état le plus déplorable, et que ce fait constitue à la fois un attentat aux lois de l'humanité et une infraction cruelle et formelle aux prescriptions de la Convention de Genève, qui oblige les belligérants à soigner les blessés et malades ennemis sur les lieux mêmes et comme leurs propres soldats.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

Inclosure in No. 358.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 25 Décembre, 1877.*

UNE dépêche de Moukhtar Pacha du 24 Décembre nous apprend que les tristes prévisions sur le sort réservé à nos soldats blessés ou malades tombés au pouvoir des Russes à Kars se sont malheureusement réalisées. Deux mille d'entre eux ont été expédiés de Kars à Erzéroum. Sur ce nombre, la moitié a succombé en route au froid et à la fatigue, et l'autre moitié est arrivée à Erzéroum dans l'état le plus déplorable. Je vous prie de porter ce fait à la connaissance du Gouvernement près duquel vous êtes accrédité en ayant soin de constater qu'il constitue à la fois un attentat aux lois de l'humanité et une infraction cruelle et formelle aux prescriptions de la Convention de Genève, qui oblige les belligérants à soigner les blessés et malades ennemis sur les lieux mêmes et comme leurs propres soldats.

No. 359.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, December 27, 1877.*

AT an audience yesterday the Shah, with reference to certain recent announcements in European newspapers, stated explicitly that the Persian Agent referred to in my despatch No. 185 has no political mission whatever confided to him, and that he is charged solely with arrangements for the visit to Europe which His Majesty will declare it to be his intention to make *incognito* next spring at his own expense.

No. 360.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 27, 6·45 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, December 27, 1877, 5·15 P.M.*

I HAVE acted on your telegram of 5·20 P.M. yesterday.

French Minister for Foreign Affairs says that no initiative and very little action is to be looked for from France at the present moment; that he supposes the three Emperors to have already agreed upon the preliminary conditions of peace; that the French Government are not disposed to take any step at the present stage; but that hereafter, in case of a Conference or other consultation of all the Powers, they will expect to be listened to upon questions of general European interest or of special interest to France.

No. 361.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 913.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 27, 1877.*

WITH reference to the despatch addressed to you by Mr. Consul Reade, dated the 30th ultimo, copy of which has been communicated to me by him, I have to observe that the case of the execution, without adequate grounds, of a Bulgarian at Varna is the same as that referred to in my despatch No. 882 of the 20th instant.

I should wish your Excellency, however, to call the attention of the Porte to the fact stated by Mr. Consul Reade, that the Military Tribunal which sentenced the man is composed solely of Egyptian officers, who do not speak the Turkish language, and are therefore liable to fall into errors of a serious character.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 362.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 72. Political.)

My Lord, *Trebizond, December 6, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Redifs and the Mustafiz, lately called out from this province, continue to arrive daily, and are sent to the front in companies of from 200 to 300 at a time. In round numbers 4,000 have already left for Erzeroum, and 1,600 for Batoum.

These levies consist of men of all ages, but those above middle age are not numerous. In general they are strong and healthy men; the few sick who are among them are compelled to follow their company until they drop on the road.

Two thousand Redifs and Mustafiz, who arrived yesterday from the western coast of the Black Sea, half for Erzeroum and half for Batoum, are finer men than those of this province.

No uniforms nor arms are given them here, and I need not add that they are accompanied by no baggage or provisions. Bread is furnished on the road at different stations.

They present an appearance far from prepossessing in their ragged and variegated costumes; however, they are the same stuff of men who have hitherto fought against Russia.

They are not officered, but sent to Erzeroum under the escort of a few mounted policemen, a company of 100 of whom have been organized for the purpose.

It is under the command of a captain and four lieutenants; two of the latter with fifty men are stationed at Gumushané, the remainder here.

The deserters on the road are far from being so numerous as might be supposed under the circumstances. In fact nothing could prevent all the Redifs and the Mustafiz to desert on the march if they chose to do so, but they go readily to the front.

I witnessed two days ago the departure of upwards of 200 of them; they were singing and dancing on the road.

A few of the former deserters from the army, who refuse to join their corps by

persuasion, are brought down in chains and dispatched with the other troops to their respective destinations.

The deep impression produced by the fall of Kars is subsiding; Erzeroum not having yet been taken after it was considered to be lost, hopes are arising that it will hold out until the spring.

However, the populations in this province seem to be ready for all emergencies. The Pasha assured me yesterday that, if required, young and old would rush to arms to defend their native land. He added that they were all asking for arms, and that he had distributed 1,000 rifles at Ordi, and 600 at Akdshé Abad, but that no more were available at present.

Feizi Pasha (General Kolmann) and Hussein Subri Pasha, of Ardahan, leave by to-day's steamer for Constantinople, where they are recalled.

On the 4th instant sixteen Arabs arrived here carrying a standard, sent, it is said, by the Sherif of Mecca to the army of Asia. They are about to depart for Erzeroum.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 363.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 97. Political.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, December 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 81, Political, of the 30th September last, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitalé, of Lattákia, reporting on the present state of matters in his district and the cessation of hostilities between the Mussulmans of Sahioun and the Ansariyehs of the Mountain.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 363.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

M. le Consul-Général, *Lattaquié, le 4 Décembre, 1877.*

PAR les précédents rapports que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous soumettre vous connaissez déjà le différend qui a eu lieu entre les Musulmans de Sahioun et les Ansaryehs de la Montagne, ainsi que l'arrivée ici d'Akif Pacha, et ce que les autorités civiles de Lattaquié et de Gébelé ont fait à cette occasion.

Depuis lors et après l'apparition des troupes dans la Montagne, l'attaque par les troupes des montagnards de Débbache et Elmezérin (Caïmacamlic de Lattaquié), ainsi que Zaun (Caïmacamlic de Gébelé) il ne s'est rien passé qui mérite d'être porté à votre haute connaissance, sauf une espèce de paix que le Caïmacam de cette ville a réussi de conclure entre les Ansaryehs de Bet-el-Chelf et les Musulmans de Sahioun; de part et d'autre il y a eu promesses de ne plus renouveler les attaques et de renoncer à leurs prétendus droits des uns contre les autres.

Ce qui a facilité cet arrangement, qui n'est considéré par les gens du pays que comme une trêve qui durera jusqu'au moment où les Ansaryehs se trouveront à même de se venger, c'est la misère dont souffrent et les Musulmans de Sahioun et les Ansaryehs de la Montagne; les premiers ne demandant pas mieux que de se débarasser des soldats qui étaient venus à leur recours et qui ont coûté trop cher à leur canton, tandis que les Ansaryehs voulaient éviter à tout prix de se battre avec les troupes Impériales.

Quoiqu'il en soit d'une raison ou de l'autre c'est heureux que le Gouvernement ait pour ainsi dire étouffé un mouvement qui aurait pû avoir des conséquences fâcheuses. D'ailleurs il ne croît pas jusqu'à présent prudent de faire descendre en ville les quelques soldats qui restent dans la Montagne et qu'il emploie autant que possible pour le recouvrement des impôts et à ramasser les Rédifs et les Mustahfiz des Montagnards qui ne se sont pas encore présentés aux appels réitérés de leurs bataillons respectifs et qui font toujours les récalcitrants.

Je crois devoir vous informer en passant, M. le Consul-Général, que les Montagnards sont plutôt disposés à émigrer en masses dans un autre vilayet,—c'est ce qu'ils ont du reste

commencé de faire,—que de partir pour la guerre et laisser leurs familles dans la famine qui sévit leurs villages; et que réellement il y a une grande misère dans le pays; les dernières récoltes ayant laissé beaucoup à désirer et la Montagne ayant, en conséquence des derniers événements, beaucoup perdu de ses bœufs et de ses sémences, j'ose dire que presque le tiers des terrains destinés à la culture en ce district reste inculte, soit par ce motif soit par celui du manque des bras, les Ansaryéhs des villages de la plaine ayant régulièrement fourni leurs Rédifs.

Ces derniers, de tous les habitants de ce district, sont les plus opprimés parcequ'ils sont plus exposés aux mauvais traitements des cavaliers du Gouvernement.

Les autorités de cette ville et de Gébelé ayant constaté la conduite horrible des cavaliers qu'elles avaient parmi leurs gendarmes et secondées par Akif Pacha, elles ont réussi de les changer contre de nouveaux cavaliers. Malheureusement ces nouveaux font preuve qu'ils sont plus méchants que leurs prédécesseurs et ils traitent les pauvres gens paisibles de la plaine avec une sévérité incroyable et leur coûtent presqu'autant que les impôts pécuniaires du Gouvernement lui-même.

Je suis vraiement peiné d'avoir à vous soumettre ce qui précède, tandis que, comme vous ne l'ignorez pas, M. le Consul-Général, ce district a plus que tout autre besoin d'être administré selon les bonnes intentions de Sa Majesté le Sultan pour pouvoir se relever et regagner ce qu'il a perdu par le délaissement du commerce de tabac avec l'Égypte depuis l'imposition de la taxe sur l'importation du tabac de Turquie dans le susdit pays.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALE

No. 364.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 78. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, December 15, 1877.*

IN my last despatch of the 9th instant I had the honour to report to your Lordship the meeting then assembled, under the auspices of the Committee, at a place called Arkádena, near Rethymo. The great majority of that meeting was of opinion that, in view of the counsels coming from Greece, the time was not yet arrived for taking up arms, but no little difficulty was experienced in restraining the ardour of a small party which was for proceeding to extremities at once. It is evident that the Cretans are ripe for revolt, but they know the helplessness of their position, and that without the co-operation of the Committee in Greece, which seems hitherto to have been held back by the Greek Government, the chances of a successful struggle with the Porte are not in their favour. The last harvest was a very scanty one, and it is well known that the corn in the country only suffices for two or, at most, three months' consumption. In case of rebellion therefore, the insurgents would have to depend for their supply of food on what could run the blockade, and as the great mass of the people have not the means of buying corn owing to the failure of this autumn's olive crop, their sufferings during the coming spring are in any event sure to be severe, and would be greatly aggravated by a state of warfare.

Your Lordship will not be surprised to learn that the recommendation that the Christians should send delegates to Constantinople for the discussion of their grievances with the Porte was proposed to the meeting only to be rejected by it. Should the Porte even at this late hour consent to send Commissioners to treat with the people, they would have a more difficult task before them than would have awaited them a fortnight ago, and any new military success of the Russians would of course aggravate their task.

Another great meeting has been proclaimed for to-morrow at the village of Fré in Apokorona. Each Kaïmakamlik of Central and Western Crete is to send delegates to the meeting, the immediate object of which is to appoint a general police force, after the example set by the district of Mylopetames, and more recently by Kissamos. These bodies of police have completely succeeded in putting down sheep-stealing in those districts. The presence in the country of a force not recognized by the Government naturally gives them great umbrage, as it is a direct attack on their authority. It is no secret, moreover, that the next measure in contemplation is an order for the newly-raised police force to collect the tithes to defray the cost of their keep, which is at present derived from the voluntary contributions of the inhabitants. This will be an overt act of rebellion, and can hardly fail to bring about a collision with the Government.

It is said that the Turkish Minister in Athens telegraphed two days ago to Saaib Pasha that Haji Michali, a noted Cretan Chief, had sailed from Greece with a band of

followers and some arms, in order to make a descent on the Cretan coast. In consequence of this news three corvettes steamed out of Suda Bay yesterday morning to watch the western coasts of the Island. Kokini, or Kokinaki, as he is more familiarly called, the Chief who was lately captured in Mirabello, has been brought here and lodged in prison to await his trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 365.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 79. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, December 17, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that another Chief named Matteo has landed with two companions and a few hundred rifles at Armyro, to the east of Suda Bay.

The news of the capture of Plevna arrived here yesterday, and we also learn that a Commission is coming from Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 366.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 140. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December 20, 1877.*

AS when peace negotiations commence it is possible that claims will be brought forward by the Montenegrins to the possession of the Bay of Antivari, and as they will probably be met with the plea that it is the natural port of Scutari, I venture to explain to your Lordship that such is not entirely the case.

The Bay of San Giovanni di Medua is susceptible of being transformed, with a small outlay, into one of the safest ports on this coast. It is nearer to Scutari than Antivari, and the construction of a carriageable road between it and this town would be infinitely more easy than one to Antivari, which would have to be carried over the same mountain paths which are now in use, and which are almost impracticable for commercial traffic.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 367.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 141. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December 20, 1877.*

ALI SAIB PASHA has informed me that Hussein Pasha, the General in command at Podgoritza and Spuz, has addressed a protest to the Montenegrin authorities at Danilograd against what his Excellency calls the systematic manner in which the Montenegrin batteries direct their fire against the hospitals, both at Spuz and at Podgoritza.

I believe the Montenegrins say that Spuz is so surrounded by forts, and is so small a place, that it is almost impossible to avoid occasionally hitting the hospital.

I have heard no excuse yet offered about the firing against the Podgoritza hospital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 368.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 142. Political.)
My Lord, *Scutari, December 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, the copy of a despatch addressed by me on the 19th instant to Mr. Layard, giving his Excellency the lines of territory occupied by the Montenegrins and Turks to the west of Lake Scutari.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 368.

Consul Kirby Green to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Scutari, December 19, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram of yesterday, I have the honour to report that the Montenegrins occupy, on the western side of Lake Scutari, a line extending from the villages of Zogni, Plastiva, Katerkol, Mrkovic, Pecorica, and Dobrovodu to Punta Volovica, and that the shores from this headland to the Austrian frontier are in their possession.

The only point still held by the Ottoman troops within the above indicated line is the Citadel of Antivari.

The authorities here assert that they are in constant communication with the besieged fort, and that it is capable of holding out for another month. Reports reaching me from other sources say that the garrison has already commenced to treat for its surrender.

The Turkish ships of war appear every two or three days in the Bay of Antivari, and bombard the Montenegrin batteries on Punta Volovica, Spizza, Golobrdo, and Seluï, their usual anchorage being at Val di Noci, close to Dulcigno.

The capture or destruction of all the Turkish block-houses on the frontier from Cinn to Stiena has virtually advanced Montenegro to within six miles of Scutari.

A line extending from Gorica, on the River Boyana, Tarabosh, and Siroka, is occupied by the Ottoman troops. They also still possess the free navigation of the Boyana.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 369.

Server Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 28.)

(Télégraphique.)
(Confidentielle.) *Constantinople, le 26 Décembre, 1877.*

DANS une de nos dernières entrevues, le Comte de Zichy m'a dit, d'ordre de son Gouvernement, que le Prince Milan a fait déclarer au Comte Andrassy qu'ayant fixé la Drina comme ligne de démarcation de la Principauté, il avait résolu de ne pas faire franchir ce point à ses troupes. Il a prié son Excellence d'intervenir auprès de la Sublime Porte afin que, de leur côté, les troupes Ottomanes ne dépassent pas cette ligne. Le Comte Andrassy a répondu que, la Servie étant entrée en lice sans avoir consulté le Cabinet de Vienne, il ne saurait aujourd'hui intervenir en faveur de la Principauté, et que, d'ailleurs, la Sublime Porte était libre de conduire ses opérations militaires comme bon lui semblerait. Il a ajouté que, si cette communication lui avait été faite par écrit, il n'aurait pas hésité à déclarer que, si la Servie envahissait la Bosnie ou l'Herzégovine, l'Autriche-Hongrie l'en empêcherait.

La politique de l'Autriche-Hongrie a passé par tant de phases, et actuellement encore elle nous paraît si hésitante et si incertaine qu'il n'est, je l'avoue, impossible de saisir le sens et la portée de cette dernière déclaration du Comte Andrassy. Je vous prie de communiquer confidentiellement ce qui précède à Lord Derby, et de me faire connaître quelle est l'opinion de sa Seigneurie à ce sujet.

No. 370.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 917. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 28, 1877.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and communicated to me confidentially the telegram, of which a copy is inclosed herewith, relative to a request which has been made by the Servian Government to that of Austria, that the Turkish troops should be prevented from crossing the Drina into Servia, and to the reply given by the Austrian Government to this application. The substance of this communication had already been made known to me by your Excellency's telegram of the 24th instant.

Musurus Pasha was instructed to inquire what view Her Majesty's Government took of what had passed, the import of which did not appear quite clear to the Turkish Government.

I told his Excellency that I did not see that the Porte had any reason to complain of the position taken by the Austrian Government in regard to the matter. It seemed to me that the reply made to Prince Milan was, in its tendency, favourable to Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 371.

Mr. Wyndham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 368. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, December 21, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 328 and 329 of the 2nd instant, and to my despatch No. 364 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that I asked M. Tricoupi to-day whether he had seen the letter in the "Times" of the 7th instant, to which I have alluded in my last-mentioned despatch, and whether it was true that Italy had pressed Greece to state how far she considered her frontier should extend in Albania, and also whether there were any negotiations going on between Italy and Greece as a "Havas" telegram from Constantinople appeared to imply. The telegram to which I alluded is as follows:—

"*Constantinople, le 20 Décembre*, 1877.

"Le Gouvernement Ottoman manifeste quelque inquiétude au sujet des relations intimes et suivies échangées entre l'Italie et la Grece."

M. Tricoupi replied that the statement in the "Times" to which I referred was false, that no communications on the subject in question had taken place between officials of Greece and Italy, and that no negotiations were going on between the two countries.

His Excellency, however, said that Greece was anxious to be upon good terms with all foreign Powers, and more so with Italy than with others, and that with that object the Greek Government had concluded an Extradition Treaty with Italy—a Treaty which Greece had hitherto refused to conclude with any other Power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

No. 372.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 1043.)
My Lord, *Paris, December 27, 1877.*

M. WADDINGTON was this afternoon so good as to make to me a statement of the policy which the present French Government intend to pursue with regard to the Eastern question.

France, he said, wanted nothing for herself. She did not wish for an extension of her own territory in any direction. She considered that, under present circumstances, any such extension would be a source of weakness, not of strength, to her. The French Government desired in particular that the *status quo* should be preserved in the Mediterranean.

M. Waddington begged me to state this distinctly to your Lordship. He had, he told me, begged the Russian Ambassador, Prince Orloff, to make a communication to the

same effect to the Cabinet of St. Petersburgh, and he had charged the Marquis de Vogüé, the French Ambassador at Vienna, who had set out the evening before for his post, to speak in the same sense to Count Andrassy.

M. Waddington begged me to state also to your Lordship, from him, that France had no engagement with any Power whatever; that she was wholly free from all ties, and consequently in a position to take an entirely independent course.

M. Waddington went on to say that the French Government did not intend to put itself prominently forward in present circumstances. No initiative, and very little action was to be expected from it in the present state of affairs. It was not, however, its intention to allow France to be, as it were, effaced. The voice of France would be raised on questions of general European interest, or of special interest to France, and it would no doubt be listened to with proper respect.

With regard to the manner in which the French Government purposed to apply these general principles, in the present phase of the Eastern question, M. Waddington gave me the following information.

He did not consider that the conclusion of peace directly between Russia and Turkey without the intervention of other Powers was a question which concerned France, or would render any action on the part of France advisable.

It would, he thought, be time enough for France to speak if a Conference were assembled, or if the sanction of the Powers in general to the conditions of peace were applied for in any other form.

In such a case France would still confine herself to considering the general interests of Europe or her own special interests. For instance, she would have nothing to say on the question whether Russia should make larger or smaller acquisitions of territory in Asia Minor. This seemed to the French Government to be a matter of indifference to continental Europe in general and to France in particular.

On the other hand, the opening or closing the Dardanelles and the navigation of the Danube appeared to M. Waddington to be questions of European concern, and he said, in conclusion, that he should be glad to be made acquainted with the views of Her Majesty's Government concerning these two questions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

P.S.—I send a copy of this despatch to-day by the messenger, Mr. Johnson, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

L.

December 28.

No. 373.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 1044. Confidential.)

Paris, December 27, 1877.

My Lord,

IN speaking to me this afternoon of the general policy of the French Government respecting the Eastern question, M. Waddington made, in a less official manner, some remarks on the question of the Dardanelles.

He said that he had reason to know that there were two different currents of opinion on the subject in Russia.

There was a party which desired that the Dardanelles should be opened, in order that Russian ships of war might have free egress from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean, and free ingress from the Mediterranean into the Black Sea.

There was a party which considered that this advantage would be dearly purchased by the admission of foreign fleets into the Black Sea. This party desired that the Dardanelles should be entirely closed, and that Turkey should thus be left *tête-à-tête* with Russia in the Black Sea.

M. Waddington did not seem to have formed any decided opinion on the relative advantages of these two plans to the general interests of Europe. He made, however, a passing remark that it would not suit France to have a large Russian fleet in the Mediterranean.

The suggestion made in some Russian newspapers that the Dardanelles should be open to Russian ships of war only, and closed to those of other Powers, M. Waddington seemed to consider as too preposterous to be seriously brought forward.

It appeared, he said, to be not unlikely that Turkey might be willing to purchase

concessions from Russia on other points, by complying with the Russian proposals, whatever they might be, respecting the Dardanelles. The Porte might, he thought, be willing to yield on the question of the Straits, if by so doing it could diminish Russian demands for cessions of territory.

I observed to M. Waddington that Constantinople was built of very inflammable materials, that it was specially open to attacks from the sea, that its suburbs extended along the shores of the Bosphorus, and that the Palaces of the Sovereign, and the houses of a large part of the principal inhabitants, were close to the water's edge. It would be natural, I thought, that the Turks should hesitate to make an arrangement which might bring fleets, of whose friendly character they might not always be perfectly certain, into close proximity to a capital so situated.

M. Waddington said that he supposed that Her Majesty's Government, adhering to the traditional policy of England, would prefer that the Straits should continue to be closed to all foreign fleets.

He concluded, as I have mentioned in my immediately preceding despatch, by saying that he should be glad to be made acquainted with the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

P.S.—I send to-day by the messenger, Mr. Johnson, a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

L.

December 28.

No. 374.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 1045.)

Paris, December 27, 1877.

My Lord,

IN the course of the conversation I had this afternoon with M. Waddington on the Eastern question, he repeated more than once, emphatically, that France wanted nothing for herself, and that she desired no acquisition of territory, either on the Mediterranean or elsewhere.

I answered that in this respect England and France were in exactly the same position.

With reference to this matter, M. Waddington observed to me, that when he visited England not long ago, while out of office, he had expressed to his English friends the opinion that an occupation of Egypt by England would create a bitter feeling in France, which would long interfere with cordial relations between the two countries. He said that he continued to hold this opinion; and that he was particularly anxious to maintain a good understanding with Her Majesty's Government on Egyptian affairs.

He proceeded to draw a distinction between Egypt itself and the Suez Canal. He was, he said, quite ready to admit the paramount importance to England of securing the free navigation of the Canal. He quite understood that the British Government must make it an essential object to guard against any possibility of the Canal's being closed to English shipping. He was aware that Her Majesty's Government might think it necessary to take precautions against material as well as moral obstructions to the passage; as for instance against a ship's being sunk in it so as to block it up. On the subject of providing for the Canal's being constantly kept open, he thought that the French and English Governments might, in case of need, come to a special understanding with each other.

He was speaking only for himself, as he had not discussed the matter with his colleagues, but he was sure that the French Government would be disposed to unite with the English Government in measures for making it certain that the Canal should be open at all times and under all circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 375.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 29.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, December 28, 1877, 7 P.M.*

VICE-CONSUL at Crajova reports that the Roumanian Division at Kalafat has attempted to cross the Danube higher up, but was prevented by floating ice. It would appear that an attack was intended on the west of Widdin by the Roumanians in conjunction with the Servians.

No. 376.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 585.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 29, 1877.*

I AM informed from a good, though not official, source that the Russians have turned the Turkish left at Kamsourli and are threatening Sofia.

No. 377.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 726. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, December 29, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 1045 of the 27th instant, on the subject of Egypt, I think it right to mention that, in a conversation held with the French Ambassador two days ago, I took the opportunity of denying, in the strongest and plainest language which I could use, the existence of any English designs on that country, whether in the form of attempted annexation, protectorate, or the establishment of exclusive influence. All that Her Majesty's Government desired, I said, was free passage through the Canal, and the absence, so far as Egypt was concerned, of undue influence on the part of any other Power.

We asked nothing for ourselves, but what we were willing that the rest of the world should equally enjoy.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 378.

Lord Tenterden to the Secretary to the Eastern Question Association.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 29, 1877.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 17th instant, I am directed by the Earl of Derby to inform you that the case of the Bulgarian, Dragoilo Nidelcha Raduch, having been reported by Mr. Consul Reade to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, his Excellency at once brought the matter to the notice of the Grand Vizier, who promised that he would lose no time in communicating with the authorities at Varna on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 379.

Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December 30, 1877.*

I LEAVE to-night for London.

No. 380.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 586.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 30, 1877.*

CONSUL BLUNT telegraphs to-day from Adrianople that there is a heavy snow storm there, at Philippopolis, and at Shipka.

No. 381.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 186. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December 11, 1877.*

CONSIDERABLE sensation was created at Belgrade during the last two days by a reported mutiny amongst the militia men at Kragoniévatz.

It is not easy to ascertain the actual facts, as the public are unusually prone to exaggeration on such occasions, and the authorities are suspected of a desire to conceal any untoward or inconvenient facts which happen out of Belgrade.

It appears, however, that about eighty militiamen refused being sworn in as soldiers at Kragoniévatz, and caused a disturbance, leaving that town with their rifles for their native village Topola.

This is the birthplace of the famous Chieftain Cara-George, and his descendant, the present pretender, is still owner of a farm there, adjoining a church, and surrounded by a thick wall, and he is supposed to have some adherents in the village.

The mutineers, on hearing that they were being pursued by soldiers of another battalion, took refuge behind this wall at Topola, and are reported to have defended themselves there. About one-half of them were ultimately taken, and have been brought as prisoners to Belgrade to be tried here, the remainder fled to the adjoining woods, where they are being pursued.

This is all that is known here on this subject, and will be, I fear, some time before the full truth can be ascertained on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 382.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 188. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December 12, 1877.*

THE news was received here yesterday of the surrender of Plevna, and produced naturally a considerable sensation; but, although the satisfaction caused by this news is great, there is at the same time much uneasiness felt that the Emperor of Russia might conclude peace without even giving Servia an opportunity to take a part in the war.

It is fully expected that at Belgrade that hostilities may commence any day, as almost the entire Servian force is being concentrated on the Turkish frontier, and will thus be available for action.

Riots occasioned by the mutiny of some militiamen took place in the neighbourhood of Kragoniévatz owing to their unwillingness to march, and are said to have been accompanied by loss of life.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 383.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 191. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, as war was not proclaimed here on the 12th instant (St. Andrew's day), as anticipated, it was believed that actual hostilities

were postponed for a few days, and it was very much feared that, in the interim, negotiations might be initiated by the Porte which would make it impossible for Prince Gortchakow to claim any advantage for Servia.

A Proclamation of Prince Milan was, however, issued this morning by which war was declared against the Porte, stating that he was going to fight under the auspices of the Emperor of Russia, the Liberator, for liberation and for the independence of Servia.

All the schools have been closed, and martial law has been enacted.

It is probable that a Servian corps will co-operate with Roumanians against Widdin, whilst the main of the Servian army will be directed towards Old Servia, on the Yavor, and that Prince Milan will proceed to the latter army on Sunday next.

An agent of the Bosnian Insurrectionary Committee is here, and applied last week to this Government for active support, but has been refused.

The reason of this is very clear; the Russian instructions to Prince Milan hold out hopes of acquisitions to him within certain limits, and there is no doubt that these refer only to particular localities, whilst other districts are reserved for ulterior decisions more in accordance with the supposed programme of the three Emperors.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 384.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 194. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December 19, 1877.*

WITH reference to the direction in which the Prince of Servia proceeded to join his army, as mentioned in my telegram of the 14th instant, I have the honour to correct my previous statement by reporting that His Highness has taken up his provisional headquarters at Alexinatz, and is accompanied by General Protitch, his Chief of the Staff, by General Zach, who lost his leg in the previous war, and by M. Vassilievitch, the Minister of Public Instruction.

The troops sent on the Yavor in the direction of Sienitza are under Colonel T. Nikolitch, and are intended to occupy a tract of country to which Prince Milan intends to put forward a claim at the peace.

It appears that this Prince intends watching the operations of the main portion of his army, which will endeavour to effect a connection somewhere between Pirot and Biclograd-chik with some of the Russian columns under General Ghourko.

It remains to be seen whether it will be still possible for any of these to push their way on to Sofia at this advanced season, and whether the combined efforts of Hafiz Pasha at Novi Bazar and of the small garrison at Nish, assisted by Albanian irregulars, will not be sufficient in their flank to embarrass and restrain any projected advance of this kind.

Colonel Horvatovitch, with about 12,000 men, is expected to effect a junction with a Roumanian force, so as to isolate Widdin.

I am informed that the Roumanian army will not be employed in any other military operations, with the exception of the above, and will have to guard the passages on the Danube.

The total force under Prince Milan will consist of 54 battalions, or about 40,000 men, whilst the remaining 20,000 men will be employed on the Yavor, and to guard the frontier on the Drina.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 385.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 195. Political. Secret.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December 19, 1877.*

WITH reference to the application of the Bosnian insurgent Chief Skobla to Prince Milan for active assistance, to which I had the honour to allude in a previous despatch to your Lordship, I beg to convey the following secret information:—

Some time ago a Russian named Jonine, a brother of the well-known Russian Consul-General at Ragusa, was provisionally elected by different Bosnian Chiefs as a sort of head centre of the insurrectionary propaganda in that province; and soon afterwards he got a hint to resign, and a person of the name of Skobla was elected in his place.

This individual has been staying during a fortnight at Belgrade, having constant interviews with M. Ristitch and other influential persons, to whom he admitted that it was perfectly useless to obtain autonomic institutions for his province, and that the only future he and his friends desired was the annexation of his province either to Servia or to the Austrian Monarchy.

M. Ristitch most positively denies that he or the Prince entertain any ambitious plans with regard to Bosnia at present; they admit, likewise, that it costs them much to do this, but that they are compelled to it by Russia, out of deference to Austria.

General Ignatieff and other Russian Diplomatists have professed for some time that Bosnia, either entire or a great portion of it, was to be disposed of in any way that would suit Austria best.

My Italian colleague has on many occasions, in strict confidence, spoke to me of the possibility of such an arrangement, which his Government dreads immensely, and it is on this account that its agents are so frequently found out intriguing with Servian and Montenegrin leaders, and always in opposition to Austrian views.

The rivalship of these two Powers on South Slavonic soil will, I fear, be a constant source of trouble in future.

A few days ago Linbobratitch left Belgrade for Bosnia, to foment fresh disturbances there. It is difficult to reconcile his departure with the professions of this Government, unless it could be supposed that Russian influence has induced them to work there so as to accelerate a decision of the Court of Vienna, by fostering a renewal of agitation which might compel Count Andrassy to come forward boldly and claim immediate influence there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 386.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 198. Political.)
My Lord, *Belgrade, December 20, 1877.*

WITH regard to the disturbance reported by me to your Lordship on the 11th instant, I believe it has been entirely and effectually suppressed.

M. Ristitch accuses the Porte of having encouraged the authors of it through some of its agents at Pesth.

The Minister of the Interior tells me that the principal leader of this mutiny, one Jivteitch, or Jivitch, a peasant farmer, has been apprehended, and that the inquest is being proceeded with.

The discontent existing in this country is entirely latent, and though there may be a few partisans of the Pretender Cara George here and there, it is almost certain that there there is no danger of an outbreak as long as this war lasts; unless in case of a great Servian disaster, or of an occupation of a large portion of territory by Ottoman troops.

It is not impossible that the Porte may have been deluded by the reports of some of her agents into the belief that it would be an easy matter to kindle a civil war in the Principality; but it is my opinion that no such result is to be expected.

Some of the friends of the Pretender reside at Pesth, and they may have held some communications with pro-Turkish sympathizers there.

The present Grand Vizier visited Belgrade twice officially, the last time nineteen years ago, and I was surprised to find, in talking to his Highness, how little he realized the great change in public feeling which has taken place here since his last visit.

It is indeed strange how little the highest functionaries of the Porte are acquainted with what has been going on during the whole of that period in all these Principalities, though these still continued under the suzerainty of that Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 387.

Vice-Consul Bonham to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 10. Political.)

My Lord, *Jassy, December 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that on the arrival of the first news of the taking of Plevna on Tuesday, a good many flags were put out and there were some illuminations in the evening. Yesterday there was a *Te Deum*, and the illuminations at night were more general, though of a primitive character.

There is no doubt that the greatest satisfaction is felt at the fall of Plevna, and the belief and hope is general that it will lead to the conclusion of peace. I do not think the war was ever popular here, and certainly all those to whom I have spoken, I may say without exception, have for some time past expressed an earnest wish for peace, and I believe that such is the universal desire in this part of the country.

There is no doubt people were much gratified at, and proud of, the praise bestowed upon the Roumanian troops for their conduct in the attack on Gravitza, but the effects of the war have been felt here in many ways, and whenever peace is concluded it will be hailed with the liveliest satisfaction.

Trade has suffered considerably; the past harvest has been an average one, and there is a very large quantity of grain in the country available for export, but it cannot now leave by Galatz, and although some has been sent north by rail through Austria, the quantity is comparatively small; at this railway station, and I fear at all others from Roman to the Austrian frontier at Sucava, it is the same; sacks of grain are lying in heaps exposed to deterioration from the weather, awaiting trucks; but the railway is so occupied with military traffic that but little can be sent away; this difficulty in the disposal of the produces of the country is very serious.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. W. BONHAM.

No. 388.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 16. Political.)

My Lord, *Damascus, December 17, 1877.*

IN my despatch No. 8, Political, of the 20th April last, I had the honour to report to your Lordship upon the state of affairs in this Consular district, more especially in connection with the declaration of war by Russia.

Although I have not failed, since then, to forward to your Lordship's Department copies of all reports made by me to Her Majesty's Ambassador upon salient points of interest in their order of occurrence, I venture to think that a general report upon public affairs may not, after this lapse of time, be deemed out of place.

Since June last the vilayet has been placed for civil purposes under the charge of the Commander-in-chief of the Syrian Corps d'Armée, and there seemed no immediate intention of filling up the vacant post of Vali or Governor-General. The rivalry always existing in this province between the civil and military chiefs, and which obtained peculiar prominence in May last, during the tenure of office of Zia Pasha, when civil and military interest clashed in matters of conscription, has, I have reason to believe, weighed with the Porte in inviting temporarily the two offices under the Military Chief.

The Civil Administration of the Province has, however, suffered, and may be said to be practically at a stand-still. The Commander-in-chief possesses avowedly no administrative capacity in civil matters, and apparently no controlling ability which might enable him to infuse energy into departments or to check corruption, always rife, but now, owing to the virtual stoppage of pay of *employés*, naturally much increased. Everything is left to subordinates, who neglect all matters not capable of bearing personal pecuniary benefits.

Conscription has been, and still is being, carried out in those parts of the country more immediately under Goverment control, with a rigour only tempered by the means of evasion offered by official corruption.

While large sums have been made by this latter means, it has followed that the conscripts have been necessarily drawn from the poorest classes of the urban and rural population; and, in order to make up the proper complement, in unjust proportions,

causing the greatest distress among the numerous families of women and children left unprovided for save by the pittance of Government and of the charitable.

Warlike or religious enthusiasm has been totally wanting; and I have been unable to find an instance where these sentiments have triumphed over the facilities for exemption, by purchase or otherwise, even at any sacrifice, from military service.

Desertion and concealment have been practised whenever possible, and have been limited solely by the difficulty of obtaining existence in those unsettled parts, where refuge alone is procurable, and by the few opportunities for plunder as a means of subsistence which the poverty of the country at present presents.

Although the many thousands who have been sent to the war have left their families with the full knowledge of the utter want to which they were necessarily reduced, no act of insubordination or breach of discipline has taken place, and their conduct has been such as to command admiration.

These remarks, I beg respectfully to add, apply exclusively to the "Sunni," or Orthodox Moslems of Damascus and of its four rural districts, and who form the large majority of the population.

In the Sub-Governorship of Baalbec, inhabited chiefly by the Metuali, or "Shiite," Moslem, a tribe noted for its turbulence and readiness at all times to avail of any difficulty in which the Government may be placed, the conscription was, however, attended by the most barren results, chiefly owing to the great facilities for evasion offered by corrupt functionaries. Outrages perpetrated during the summer by Metuali robbers upon Sebaum territory resulted in the dispatch, with the concurrence of the Commander-in-chief, of 300 to 400 of the Sebaum Gendarmerie to Baalbec, and to the ultimate seizure, in spite of local intrigue, of several hundred men, who, whether individually liable to conscription or not, were hurried of to Beyrout for enrolment and embarkation.

The Metualis of Baalbec number about 3,000 fighting men, and are of the finest physique in Syria. Happily for the Government, the never-failing presence of feuds among their chief families prevents any unity of action among them.

Besides the large sums paid for military exemption from the Nizam and Redif classes by all who could scrape together the means, and which have been now lost by the calling out for foreign service of the Mustafiz or last reserves, taxation has been pressed to its utmost limits by the addition of forced loans of various denominations and of constant recurrence; and large arrears have accumulated despite the rigours of the tax-gatherer.

Notwithstanding the withdrawal of regular troops, the fears of the Christian communities of fanatical outbreak have been in no degree realized. On the contrary, the public tranquillity and absence of any hostile expression of feeling on the part of their Moslem brethren have never been equalled in any time of peace. Outside Damascus the roads are insecure, especially to the east, where Bedouin plunderers are not rare, and the people may be said to take care of themselves as best they can.

On the other hand, the rigours of conscription and taxation, coupled with the news of recent reverses, have of late converted the little sympathy of the multitude with the Government into open expressions of disaffection, and in many instances of despairing indifference as to the results of the war.

Such, my Lord, is the state of things in what I may call the settled districts of Damascus, where the moral, rather than the material, influences of the Government have so far sufficed to preserve order, and to compel the fulfilment of Imperial requirements in the matters of conscription and taxation.

In the adjacent Governorship of the Hauran, with its heterogeneous population and large extent of territory, where military service is commuted by a money payment leviable in a lump sum upon the country, deficient harvests, alleged unjust exactions of the tax-gatherer, and the paucity of repressive force at the command of the authorities (numbering 120 zaptiehs for the whole of the country), resulted lately in the authorities being openly defied, and the roads to Damascus being stopped, by the Moslem peasantry of the plains. The appointment of Akif Pasha, late Military Governor of Beyrout, who recently acted against the Nuzairch mountaineers to the north of Tripoli, and his appearance on the scene with a force of 300 men, have, however, sufficed to restore order, and to enforce the partial payment of the taxes without serious collision.

In the sub-Governorship of Jebel Ajloon, to the south of the Hauran, the mountainous portion of which most fertile region had paid no taxes for nine months, on the plea of the insufficient protection accorded to them by the Government from Bedouin raids and their consequent poverty, Akif Pasha has stationed the bulk of his forces, with two guns, at El Husu, at the base of the mountain, and has given the mountaineers a few days' delay to make submission before resorting to force. Jebel Ajloon, I am told, contains a population

of 30,000, of which 4,000 are Christians, who differ little from their Moslem fellows in civilization.

The Druzes of the Hauran being necessarily in no way disturbed in their quasi-independence by the authorities, took no open part in these troubles in their midst.

In conclusion, my Lord, I regret to say that, in addition to the continued stagnation of trade and industry, breadstuffs are at famine prices, and it were difficult to depict the gloom and misery which cover the land.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

No. 389.

Sir R. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 62.)
Tunis, December 18, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my conversations with my French colleague, he stated, as one of the reasons for which his Government was desirous to secure the neutrality of this Regency in the present war between Russia and Turkey, the apprehension which it entertained, that the Regency might possibly be included in any future combination likely to form the basis of peace between the belligerents.

M. Roustan adverted to the attempt made by Germany to purchase or procure a port on the coast of Morocco. Having failed, he was not quite certain whether Germany had not made a similar attempt here. At any rate, he had little doubt as to the views of Italy with reference to Tunis; and it was feared in Paris that Prince de Bismarck might deem the opportunity a favourable one for inducing Russia to include, in the conditions of peace with Turkey, the surrender of the Port of Bizerta, or Porto Farina, to her, with the object of transferring it afterwards either to Germany or Italy. Such an eventuality would be highly detrimental to the interests of France, and could only be avoided by a declaration of neutrality on the part of the Bey, and his refusal to comply with the requisitions of the Ottoman Government.

I observed to M. Roustan that it was not probable that Russia, which had direct interests of her own to serve, would increase the difficulties of concluding peace with Turkey by adding to her conditions a demand of the nature he described. But in the supposition even that Russia, Germany, Austria, and Italy had resolved, in certain eventualities, that the former Power should insist upon the surrender of a Tunisian port for the purpose he mentioned, the declaration of the Bey's neutrality would not be taken into consideration by them, inasmuch as neither Russia, Germany, or Austria had ever recognized the Regency otherwise than as an integral part of the Ottoman dominions.

I stated, however, to Mr. Roustan that, although such was my personal impression, yet, as it would appear that the French Government had reasons to apprehend a combination, which caused it anxiety, I would do myself the honour of laying the matter before your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 390.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 29. Political. Confidential.)
Corfu, December 27, 1877.

My Lord,

THE political horizon in this quarter presents such marked indications of approaching trouble that, although most anxious to spare the Department by restricting my correspondence on political subjects within the narrowest possible bounds, I trust to be held excused if I venture to submit the following particulars for your Lordship's information.

2. I have taken occasion more than once to invite attention to the designs of the Italian Government on certain portions of Epirus which formerly belonged to Venice, about which the Italian partizans here make no secret.

I now have it from a source which claims the highest credibility that it enters into the schemes of the Italians to get hold of this island at any sacrifice, and that it will be proposed to the Greek Government, if it has not already been proposed, to surrender

provisionally in appearance, but permanently in fact, in exchange for a certain number of ships of war, which Italy can contrive to spare, and Greece stands greatly in need of.

Dating from the period of the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece, the Italians have had views on Corfu, which they consider they are entitled to as a matter of right, owing to its proximity to their coast, and as an old Venetian possession.

In 1865, the year after the cession, the Italian fleet commanded by Admiral Vacca came to Corfu and remained for a period of six weeks. I was at the time acting for Sir S. Saunders, the Consul-General, who had been called home to give information in the affair of the Woodhouse Museum.

On that occasion I got intimately acquainted with the Admiral and the superior officers of the squadron, and there was a frequent interchange of hospitalities between us. Some of the officers used to spend an evening at the Consulate, and as I had gained the reputation of being a warm friend of their country, the conversation at times turned on the future aims of Italy, and her right to an extension of territory in various directions. They even talked in a broken-hearted way of the injustice done to them by the surrender of Corfu to Greece, and told me, in all confidence of course, that the object of their coming was to sound the dispositions of the Corfiotes, and to make themselves popular in the place.

Information acquired under such circumstances, I did not think it would have been fair or honourable to report officially, and I did not.

To say the truth, I felt rather disposed to treat it as one of those Italian "boutades," which savour too much of the ridiculous to be taken seriously.

Shortly after this came the crushing battle of Lissa, and there was an end for a time of all schemes of territorial acquisitions beyond the boundaries of Italy itself.

I am now, however, reminded, in a somewhat forcible manner, of my confidential interviews with my young naval friends. Circumstances are now greatly altered: some of them perished at Lissa, and those of them who may still be alive can be in no way harmed by this communication, which I venture to make in the strictest confidence, and which your Lordship will know how to estimate at its true value.

A straw thrown up in the air sometimes tells how the wind blows.

3. I regret to find that ammunition continues to be sent from hence across the Channel to Albania. How this can be permitted, consistently with the neutral status of Corfu, I do not pretend to explain. The natives begin to be afraid of a visit from a Turkish fleet one of these days, and this, conscience tells them, not without good reason.

4. The inclosures contain all that is worth reporting of my information from the Southern Islands since the date of my last despatch. Copies of the reports from Cephalonia and Zaute have already been transmitted to Mr. Wyndham, who, I trust, will be able to divine who the two Members of the Ministry at Athens are of whom Mr. Stevens makes such honourable mention.

Humbly apologizing for the extreme length of this despatch, I have, &c.
(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 390.

Vice-Consul Stevens to Sir C. Sebright.

(Extract.)
Zaute, December 22, 1877.

THE reports from Athens are so conflicting that one finds oneself frequently at a loss what to think or what to believe; of one thing, however, I am convinced, as it comes to me from very good authority, i.e., that the revolutionary Committees at Athens and other parts of Greece, formed for the purpose of revolutionizing Epirus and Thessaly, are in active communication with the Servian and Montenegrin Governments, who, on their part, are doing all they can to plunge Greece into war with Turkey. I have it also from a source generally well informed, that though the Greek Ministry apparently are united, two of its members are secretly aiding and abetting the action of the revolutionary Committees.

Here we are quiet. Ladies are busy in collecting all they can for the "Croix Rouge."

The Zautiots, who, as a whole, rarely distinguish themselves for sobriety of thought, display little sympathy for war; they seem to understand that the result of war with

Turkey would be more than doubtful, and that in the event of defeat, Greece, in many respects, would be irrevocably ruined.

Inclosure 2 in No. 390.

Acting Vice-Consul Saunders to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Cephalonia, December 23, 1877.

(Extract.)

TURNING to politics, I must say that the people here do not seem half as enthusiastic as their brethren in Greece; though I do not mean by this to detract from their reputation for patriotism, for they are ready, when it comes to the push, to make a sacrifice in the shape of pecuniary aid for the common weal. Some people say that, as Government has not taken proper measures in time, they are not prepared for war, and it would be rash to attempt such a thing, unless there were a certainty of an intervention on their behalf on the part of the protecting Powers. There are others, and perhaps the more sanguine, who think war inevitable, as the rising of the Greeks in Candia, and on the continent, cannot but compromise matters, and besides, they are of opinion that England may in the end approve of such a proceeding, and bring forward the Greek nation, in order to counteract Russian influence in the East.

The above particulars I have obtained from respectable people here; you, however, who know the Cephalonian character better than myself, having had more time to study it, and penetration as well, can supply the rest.

Inclosure 3 in No. 390.

Vice-Consul Onofrio to Consul Sir C. Sebright.

Santa Maura, December 23, 1877.

(Extract.)

THE troops have not yet received the order for departure, nor have any fresh troops arrived.

Target practice with the mountain breech-loading guns commenced on Tuesday last.

According to the prevailing opinion in local military circles, Greece will take the field in the early part of February. Considering, however, the present state of equipment of the army—at least of the portion of it stationed here—I do not see how this could be effected with any possible chance of success. Moreover, the Turks on the other side have for months been actively preparing to meet this contingency, and there is no doubt they are ready to give the Greeks a warm welcome. However indisputable the gallantry of the Greek soldier may be, will he find it an easy task with the chassepôt to compete with the superior weapons of his adversary?

This will certainly be a terrible drawback, unless indeed the chassepôts be forthwith superseded by better weapons. Till now the "Gras" have not been distributed, and it is said there is not a sufficient quantity of them in hand. And, again, how do they intend to protect the ports against a Turkish bombardment? These are questions, I regret to say, very lightly taken into account by patriots, who are far too sanguine of success.

No. 391.

Mr. Lumley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 136. Most Confidential.)

Brussels, December 29, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is now more than a year since His Royal Highness the Comte de Flandre spoke to me on the subject of Oriental affairs in the following terms:—

In his opinion, he said, everything turned on the question, Is it or is it not desirable that Russia should obtain possession of Constantinople? The projected occupation of Bulgaria means nothing more nor less, and Servia, Roumania, and Greece are the tools she possesses to employ for the attainment of her aim.

If England and Europe have nothing to fear from the supremacy of Russia at Constantinople, it is conceivable that the Powers should not interfere with her progress in

that direction, but if it is undesirable, then it is better that Russia should be warned in time that she will not be allowed to supplant the authority of the Sultan there, rather than that she should be evicted from Constantinople after she has once got a footing there, a measure which, should it become necessary, would entail a loss of life and treasure fearful to contemplate, whereas at present it can be prevented without expense or danger.

England has the power, and she has only to let it be known that she is prepared to use it, should such necessity arise, to put a stop at once to the projects of Russia in the East, and surely such prevention would be preferable to the cure.

But England may not always be in the position to speak with such weight as at the present moment. The late Emperor Napoleon once said, "England justly prides herself on being the first commercial Power in the world, but that is because she is at the same time a political Power of the highest importance; should she, however, carry her abstention from the affairs of the Continent too far, she will run the risk of losing that political force, and when once that is diminished, her commercial supremacy will disappear with it."

At present, said His Royal Highness, in addition to that political and commercial power, England possesses the absolute supremacy of wealth, while Russia, who is intriguing to oust her from her exalted position, has an empty exchequer and no means of replenishing it. It is said that Germany, for reasons best known to Prince Bismarck, favours the projects of Russia, and the abstention of Germany from taking part in the affairs of the East has strengthened this opinion, but there can be no doubt that Germany, if she chose, could instantly put a stop to the action of Russia in the East; if she does not use that power it is because Prince Bismarck has good reason for the abstention, and that reason may possibly be the wish to see Russia in difficulties, when Germany might put some awkward questions to Russia as to the nationality of the inhabitants of the Baltic provinces, and urge very cogent arguments why Reval and Riga should again become German ports. The Emperor of Germany is, do doubt, thoroughly Russian at heart, but neither the Government, nor the army, nor the people, partake of the Emperor's views.

Speaking with reference to the possibility of Russia obtaining possession of the mouths of the Danube, the Comte de Flandre said he had asked one of the Ministers at Berlin how Germany would like to see that river under Russian domination and its consequent restrictions to trade, with, perhaps, duties of 50 per cent. levied on German produce. The answer he received was, that it was ridiculous to suppose that Germany could submit to such a state of things, and that it would never be permitted.

As few persons have better judgment than the Comte de Flandre, and fewer still enjoy such excellent sources of information, I have thought it might be of interest to recall the opinions of His Royal Highness, which, though enunciated so long ago, appear to have such remarkable significance at the present moment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. SAVILE LUMLEY.

No. 392.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 587.)

Constantinople, December 30, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

LIEUTENANT CHERMSIDE telegraphs, under date 29th, that there is a gale and snow-storm at Varna. No news.

No. 393.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 467.)

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I APPROVE the note addressed by your Excellency to M. de Giers, of which copy is inclosed in your despatch No. 693 of the 17th instant, respecting the casualties in the hospital at Rustchuk, in consequence of the fire of the Russian batteries directed at that building.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 394.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 468.)

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I APPROVE the note addressed by your Excellency to M. de Giers, copy of which is inclosed in your despatch No. 694 of the 17th instant, relative to the request of the Grand Vizier for the expatriation of certain families removed from the Turkish territory in Armenia.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 395.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 471.)

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I APPROVE the note, copy of which is inclosed in your Excellency's despatch No. 714 of the 19th instant, addressed by you to M. de Giers, relative to the reported intention of the Russian military Commanders in Asia to send to Erzeroum some sick and wounded Turkish prisoners now at Kars.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 396.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 120. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 346, Confidential, of the 13th instant, reporting a conversation which you have had with M. Tricoupi on the attitude of Greece in view of the present state of affairs in Turkey, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held on that occasion.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 397.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Wyndham.

(No. 121.)

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 348, Confidential, of the 13th instant, and I have to state to you that I consider as satisfactory the explanation which you gave therein as to the manner in which you have reported your recent conversations with M. Tricoupi.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 398.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.

(No. 38. Political.)

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 135, Political, of December 8, relating to the case of some Christians who had been forced to join the corps of Bashi-Bazouks, and who applied to you to obtain their discharge, and I have to convey to you my approval of your proceedings.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

END

No. 399.

The Earl of Derby to Musurus Pasha.

Foreign Office, December 31, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's note of the 26th instant, in which you call my attention to the treatment of Turkish sick and wounded by the Russian authorities at Kars.

I have forwarded a copy of your note to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, and have instructed him to bring it to the notice of the Russian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.